

AFRICAN INCIDENTS



Photo. Brown & Stuart

A. B. Houston

AFRICAN INCIDENTS

PERSONAL EXPERIENCES IN EGYPT AND UNYORO

By BREVET-MAJOR A. B. THRUSTON.

OXFORDSHIRE LIGHT INFANTRY

WITH AN INTRODUCTION

BY GENERAL SIR ARCHIBALD HUNTER, K.C.B., D.S.O.

A MEMOIR OF THE AUTHOR BY HIS BROTHER, E. H. THRUSTON

AND

AN ACCOUNT OF MAJOR THRUSTON'S LAST STAY IN 1897 IN
THE PROTECTORATE, HIS DEATH, AND THE
MUTINY OF THE UGANDA RIFLES

WITH PORTRAIT, MAPS, AND ILLUSTRATIONS

FROM THE AUTHOR'S SKETCHES

LONDON

JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET

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TO THAT DARK SYREN

AFRICA

*'Te videam, suprema mihi quum venerit hora
Te teneam moriens, deficiente manu.'*

'Thou art black but comely, O my beloved!'

P R E F A C E

AN apology is due for this book. • It is the duty of officers in my regiment to send to their annual "Chronicle" an account of all their proceedings; mine were too lengthy for the patience of the Editor, and this book is the result.

I thought to offer another apology for the style; but from one who has spent his life either in garrisons, or in the wilds, and whose only literary apprenticeship has consisted of infrequent contributions to Blue Books, which are not literature at all, "*bonus vir sine literis*," is the highest praise, and good style is not to be expected. If, however, in my own, there is to be found any want of clearness and of lucidity, I must lay the blame on a relative whose opinion has great weight with me, and who assures me that, like mist on a hill top, a slight obscurity is often an added beauty.

PREFACE

After apologies, I would venture on a justification. "*C'est icy un livre de bonne foy.*" All that I have written has happened, and all that has happened I have written. I have concealed nothing, neither facts nor opinions.

UNYORO, 1st August 1897.

NOTE

IN the spelling of foreign names, the consonants have their English, and the vowels their Italian, sounds. The only exceptions are well-known names like Suakin, Assouan, Uganda, and Unyoro, which should properly be spelt, Sawakin, Aswan, Buganda, and Bunyoro. "Wa," in Swahili, means "people of," e.g., Wa-Kiku, Wa-Ganda, Wa-Unyoro, Wa-Scotti, the people of Kikuyu, Uganda, Unyoro, Scotland. Emin Pasha should be spelt Amin Pasha. -

CONTENTS

'Introduction, by Major-General Sir Archibald Hunter, K.C.B.	13
Memoir of the late Major Thruston, by his brother, E. H. Thruston	17

PART I.

CHAPTER I.—IN THE EGYPTIAN ARMY.

Life at a Dépôt—Professional Zeal in Egypt—A Dinner with the Khedive—The March to Kossier—The Capture of Tokar— Suakin—Red Sea Ports—Tokar—The Bedawin—Nafar Mahmoud—Amecr of Kokreb—Patrol to Sinkat—Tewfik Bey's Defence and Death—The Ride to Disibl—The Affair at Haretin—Return to Suakin—Triumphal Procession— Building a Blockhouse at Oshid—Osman Digna resents it— • It is Reinforced—Nafar Surrenders—Oshid is Abandoned— The Sirdar Arrives—Cavalry Demonstration—Death of Hamid Hassin Anob—I Leave Egypt	35
--	----

PART II.—UGANDA.

Introduction to Part II.	77
----------------------------------	----

CHAPTER II.—OUTWARD BOUND.

Sir Gerald Portal's Mission to Uganda—Start to join him under • Colonel Colville—An Outward Voyage—Zanzibar—A • Dynastic Crisis—The New Sultan—Mombasa—The Zanzi- bari Porter—His Life and Death	95
---	----

PART II.—(continued).

CHAPTER III.—THE MARCH TO UGANDA.

	PAGE
Horses—General Description of the Route—Detailed Description— The Wa-Kamba—Game Country—Kikuyu—The Rift Valley —Kavirondo—Its People—Black Beauty and White—The Victoria Nyanza—Travelling by Canoe—Bishop Hannington's Murderer—African Scenery—Egotism of the Obscure— Colville's Secret	106

PART III.—UNYORO.

CHAPTER IV.—THE UNYORO EXPEDITION: OR

"CHASSE AUX NÈGRES."

Foreign Exploring Parties—Kabarega, King of Unyoro—War Declared—The March to the Frontier—Crossing the Kafu— Mapala Occupied—Kabarega Retreats—Attempt to surprise him—The Albert Nyanza—Kibiro—March to Magungo— Affair at Katullaj—Loss of Purkiss—Return to Kibiro— Purkiss reappears—Owen goes to Wadelai—Returns— Establishment of Fort Hoima—End of the Expedition—Its Results	125
---	-----

CHAPTER V.—THE OCCUPATION OF UNYORO.

Building the Fort at Hoima—The Affair at Kisabagwe—Rabadongo's Adventure—Search for the Troops of the Congo Free State— Finding Them—Their Complacency—Their Story—Down the Nile to Ayara's Village—Signing Treaties—Patrol to Masindi—A Love Tragedy—After the Belgians again— Difficulties—A Platonic Argument—Success—The Exodus— Deaths—At Magungo—Fear—Back to Hoima—The Capture of Masaja Makuro	153
---	-----

CONTENTS

11

PART III.—(continued).

CHAPTER VI.—THE OCCUPATION OF UNYORO (continued).

	PAGE
Gibb's Journey to Umruli—His Return to England—A Visit to Wadelai—The Chief's Roguery—Witchcraft—Establishing a Post at Mahaji Kabir—Forster's Adventures—Weekly Raids—A Visit to the Semliki—And to Insabé—Unrest on the Roads—Kabarega's Grand <i>Coup</i> —Frustrated by the Action at Mapala—Attack on Fort Kafu—To Mahaji Kabir against the Burs—Anxiety and Grey Hairs—Serenades—Forster arrives—His Misfortunes—Our Losses—An Ivory Thief—Raid to Mashudi—Kabarega is surprised—Return March—Ambushes—To Mahaji again—Cunningham arrives—Colville falls ill and returns to England—Disappointment—Soudanese Soldiers—My Colleagues	193

PART IV.—DONGOLA.

Introduction to Part IV	237
-----------------------------------	-----

CHAPTER VII.—THE EXPEDITION TO DONGOLA.

Sea Studies—Gossip—Arrival at the Front—Cavalry Affair of the 1st of May—The Night March—Action at Firkeh—Pursuit to Suarda—Dervish Rule—The Return to Akasha	239
---	-----

CHAPTER VIII.—THE EXPEDITION TO DONGOLA (continued).

On the Line of Communications—Cholera—Daily Work—Misfortunes—Repairing the Railway—Move to Kosheh—The Army advances—I overtake them—Appointed to the Irregulars—Hide and Seek—The Army crosses the Nile—The March to Dongola—End of the Expedition and Reflections	261
--	-----

END OF PERSONAL EXPERIENCES.

SEQUEL.

Major Throston's Life in Unyoro, and Death in Usoga, and an Account of the Mutiny of the Uganda Rifles, September 1897	286
--	-----

LIST OF MAPS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

PORTRAIT OF THE AUTHOR (<i>Photogravure</i>)	<i>Frontispiece</i>
MOUNT LOBITAT—LAKE NAIVASHA	<i>To face page</i> 48
SUAKIN HILLS BETWEEN ESKOWEIT AND SINKAT	" " 74
GROUP OF A TRIBE OF THE MASAI IN WAR KIT (<i>from a Photograph by the late Lieutenant Feilding</i>)	" " 80
MASAI WAR DANCE (<i>from a Photograph by the late Lieutenant Feilding</i>)	" " 86
MOUNT KILIMA NJARO FROM KINANI	" " 96
THE PLAINS FROM THE KIU HILLS	" " 102
THE EASTERN WALL OF THE RIFT VALLEY, WITH THE TERRACES OF LAKE SUESS (<i>from "The Great Rift Valley," by Dr Gregory</i>)	" " 108
MOUNT KENIA FROM KAPTE PLAINS (<i>from "The Great Rift Valley," by Dr Gregory</i>)	" " 114
ENTEBBI, UGANDA	" " 128
FORT HOIMA—HEADQUARTERS DURING 1894	" " 154
CROSSING THE NILE AT KATUNGO ABOVE WADELAI, 1ST MAY, 1894	" " 176
MASAJA MAKURO	" " 192
THE WEST SHORE OF LAKE ALBERT—VIEW FROM THE FORT AT MAHAJI KAHR	" " 200
IREYTA'S HOUSE IN MASINDI	" " 230
MAP OF THE NILE VALLEY—WADY HALFA TO DONGOLA AND MERAWI	" " 282
MAJOR THRUSTON'S HOUSE AT MASINDI	" " 288
THE FADJOA, OR MURCHISON FALLS, VICTORIA NILE	" " 292
MAP OF THE UGANDA PROTECTORATE (WITH ROUTES)	<i>At the end</i>

INTRODUCTION

AS an old friend and comrade of the late Major A. B. Thruston, Oxfordshire Light Infantry, I have been asked to write a few words of introduction to the following pages.

Major Thruston served with me at Suakin in 1892, and part of 1893, as Staff Officer of Intelligence. He had, previously to that, served in the same capacity under Major-General Sir Charles Holled-Smith. Between 1893 and 1896 he spent some eighteen months in Uganda and Unyoro, but of his doings there, I cannot speak, except from hearsay and written reports. He came back to Egypt as Special Service Officer for the Dongola Expedition in 1896, and on its completion, returned to Unyoro, and, in September 1897, to Uganda, where he was foully murdered by the Soudanese mutineers on the 19th of the next month.

To judge of his merits as a man, it is necessary to have known him intimately. He strove to persuade strangers that he took a cynical view

of life, that he was lazy, timid, and indifferent. Now that is not the real Thruston—quite the contrary.

I have worked with him in trying times, and under varied circumstances. He was a man of great courage, quick decision, a first-class horseman and camel rider, besides being accomplished as a scholar and an artist. He had passed the higher standard of Turkish in London, and qualified to pass that in Arabic, before originally joining the Egyptian Army. He speedily acquired an influence with the Hadendoa and Arab Sheiks and tribesmen in the Eastern Soudan. His chivalry, fearlessness, and powers of physical endurance won their admiration and respect: his tact and sympathy commanded their confidence and friendship.

He was a bold leader of men, as he proved himself on several occasions in the Eastern Soudan, in Uganda, Unyoro, and on the Nile; so he must not be accepted at his own estimate. Under the cloak of a clever pessimism he concealed a kind, brave heart and unswerving belief in truth, honour, and justice, and in the doing of the right. This much I know (and I wish I could give it more eloquent expression)—his judgment, courage, prudence, and sincerity were undeniable; his society was a cheerful pleasure to his companions; he was "*Sans peur et sans reproche*;" he died fearlessly and nobly as he had lived. His friends

trusted him, his enemies feared him, his subordinates loved him. All who knew him will deplore his untimely death as a loss to his Queen and country. He might well have said of himself "*Mutare del timere sperno.*"

ARCHIBALD HUNTER,
General.

22 HALF-MOON STREET,
6th April 1899.

A MEMOIR OF THE AUTHOR

MY brother, writing from Unyoro a few weeks before his death, incidentally mentioned that he had, as his mother had asked him, jotted down in the form of a light book a few of his unusual experiences, and added, that, in order to bring an unbiassed and fresh mind to its final criticism and correction before publication, he had decided not to look at it again for some months.

After his death, in 1897, the manuscript was with some difficulty recovered and brought from Uganda. It had obviously been written in the odd moments stolen from the scanty leisure of a very active life, when, as administrator of an unsettled, though conquered, tropical province, the scene of many of his past experiences, his day's work was seldom at an end.

To have edited, however carefully, this outspoken record of the ideas of a deep-thinking man of action in very exceptional circumstances, might have lessened its chief value, and have conveyed an impression other than was intended; the book has, therefore, been

presented to the reader in its original and uncorrected form.

Arthur Blyford Thruston was the second son of Clement Arthur Thruston, of Pennal Towers, Merionethshire, and Constance, daughter of Major-General Lechmere Russell, of Ashford Hall, Shropshire, and was born at Cirencester, in 1865. The traditions of the name are neither adventurous or fighting, for the Thrustons, with the exception of one, Colonel John, of Queen Anne's guards, have been for 800 years peaceful squires in Norfolk and Suffolk. Yet the fighting services are well represented amongst Major Thruston's kin, for, in addition to his father's father, Captain Thruston, R.N., a distinguished naval officer in the beginning of the century, they number amongst them a great-grandfather and a great-uncle, admirals (Sir T. Sotheby and Sir E. Sotheby, K.C.B.); a grandfather and an uncle, generals (General Lechmere Russell, C.B., and Sir E. L. Russell, K.C.S.I.).

From a child he disclosed a rather dangerous vein of quiet wit, but though ironical it was never malicious. Though a delicate, quiet, and rather serious boy, Thruston was a bold rider and devoted to hunting, a pursuit in which he was initiated by his uncle with the Herefordshire and Ludlow hounds. He at this time gave no indication of the hardy constitution and wiry frame he developed later. Sent to Marlborough College, he showed great taste for

languages and the classics, but was not allowed time to pursue these studies, being entered at Sandhurst in November 1882, where he did well, and in January 1884 was gazetted to the Oxfordshire Light Infantry, a regiment he chose in admiration of its traditions and reputation. He joined the 2nd battalion at Limerick, and served with it in Ireland, Gibraltar, and Egypt, where the regiment was expected to join the Nile expedition of 1884, but for some reason it was left at Cairo.

Though it thus lost the opportunity of adding to its laurels, its death-roll was heavy enough, for typhoid was rife among the young soldiers, and Thruston was one of the victims. He was sent home so seriously ill that his commanding officer wrote to his mother that, much as he would regret to lose him, he feared that he would never be able to stand the work and climates which must be encountered in the Service. In after years when most of his comrades were down with fever, he contentedly marched his 17 miles a day, under a vertical sun.

Arriving in England very ill, he was taken a yachting cruise as the best means of securing recovery. This lasted five months, and comprised many weeks in the Fiords of Norway, and much cruising in the not very smooth waters of the North Sea, and off the coasts of Scotland and Ireland in a ninety-tonner. The keen breezes and salt duckings had, however, their effect, and enabled him, fully re-established in health,

to rejoin his battalion in Egypt, and go with it to India, where it was stationed at Bangalore. Here pony-racing and the study of Hindostanee seem to have occupied his spare time; but though the bungalow he shared with a brother officer by the tank was picturesque, it was not healthy, and again fever attacked him, and he was obliged to leave India, and in 1887 joined the dépôt at Cowley, near Oxford, where he remained nearly two years.

With much leisure, and an allowance inadequate to command enough sport sufficiently to occupy it, and impatient of an existence that seemed to him to be governed by conventional ethics only, and given over to the cultivation of refinements of a purely material kind, he immersed himself in a course of wide reading, his mind ever leaning to the East, its languages and literature. India, with its ancient and profound religions, had impressed him deeply. Two serious illnesses, also, had vividly brought to his mind the mysteries involved in life and death, and made him realize man's need of metaphysics, and the somewhat melancholy view he took of life, and his contempt of death, dates from this period.

Early in 1889 Thruston rejoined the 1st battalion of his regiment at Parkhurst, and was for a time detached to Marchwood magazine. Here his amusement consisted in boating, and his experience in all weathers on Southampton Water afterwards proved very useful to him on the far-away Lake Albert and

on the Nile. He spent his long leave in studying Turkish, and passed the examination as interpreter in this year.

In January 1890 he applied for and obtained an appointment to the Egyptian army, and was gazetted as Bimbashi (major) to the 13th Soudanese, then stationed at Assouan. He has himself described his life in the Egyptian army, and it is therefore unnecessary to follow it here at length. An uneventful year at Assouan was occupied mainly in garrison duty and in passing the examination in Arabic. In January 1891, his battalion was ordered to Suakin to take part in the operations against Tokar. After a forced march across the desert from Kench to Kossier, they found, to their disgust on arrival, the news that Tokar had been successfully occupied after some severe fighting, and that therefore their pains had been in vain. My brother was then attached to the Intelligence Department, in which he did some good work, and for which he was highly praised.

In May 1893 he resigned his Egyptian Commission and returned to England on leave. He was not long, however, to enjoy the quiet of country life, for, on 5th August, the day after the formal end of his contract with the Khedive, he was selected for, and offered, an appointment on the Uganda Commission, under Colonel (now Sir Henry) Colvile. This he accepted, and in less than a week sailed from England, arriving in Uganda early in September 1893; and

here again his own account takes up the narrative. It, however, omits to record the good work he did in Unyoro, where for many months there lay on him almost alone the heavy responsibility of preventing Kabarega from ravaging Uganda. He remained in Unyoro until his health, failing under the strain of such anxious and exhausting work, obliged him to return home. Colonel Colvile in his despatches, says :

“UGANDA, 8th December 1894.

“Owing to the state of his health, Captain Thruston will shortly relinquish his command . . . and will, to my great regret, leave for the coast early next year. I, therefore, in reporting this,* which is probably the last of the series of brilliant military operations which he has conducted during the term of his command, take the opportunity of begging that you will be good enough to bring his name to the notice of H.M.’s Secretary of State for foreign affairs for favourable mention to his R.H. the Commander-in-Chief. Even with an efficient military staff, the command of Unyoro would be a difficult and arduous one, and I cannot lay too much stress on the credit due to Captain Thruston for the energy and ability with which he has conducted it single-handed.”

For his services he received the thanks of the Foreign Office, the order of the Brilliant Star of Zanzibar (2nd class), a Brevet Majority, and the African Medal.

My brother brought home the leopard skins, taken, still warm, from Kabarega’s bed when the latter escaped from Mashudi, and two of Kabarega’s

* The attack and capture of Mashudi, Kabarega’s town.

standards. The bearer of one of them was found lying dead on its folds, which he had guarded, poor cotton as they were, as jealously as if they had been of silk, embroidered by a princess and blessed by a bishop. Kabàrega's witchcraft "regalia" (?) my brother sent to Sir H. Colville. During his numerous expeditions Thruston found or took ivory to the value of some £10,000 for the Government, and it is characteristic of the man that, except for these two flags and the two skins, he came home trophyless and almost kitless.

Three months' leave proved more than rest enough, and after completing a course of surveying at Chatham, he went out for the second time to India, and joined the 2nd battalion of his regiment at Bareilly, North-West Provinces.

Whilst staying at Rhanikhat, in the hills, an unexpected telegram announced a welcome appointment as a Special Service officer to the Dongola Expedition, and contained an order to proceed at once to Egypt. He was attached to the Camel Corps in the fight at Firkeh and the march to Suarda. After the close of the preliminary expedition he became Staff Officer on the Line of Communication under Colonel Cochrane, and during the advance to Dongola was in charge of the Arab irregulars. The occupation of Dongola ended, as far as the special officers were concerned, the campaign. For his services Thruston was mentioned in despatches, received the order of the Osmanieh (4th class), and the Egyptian Medal with two clasps.

When he returned home, the question soon arose, whether the upper or the lower Nile was to be his future sphere of action. An immediate decision had to be come to: on the one hand was the opportunity of rejoining the Egyptian army, and with it the prospect of another campaign in the near future; on the other, the chance of an independent and responsible position in Uganda, giving a wide scope for his administrative faculties as well as the hope of a possible expedition down the Nile to join hands with the Egyptians at Khartoum. He decided for the latter, and accepted the appointment of second in command of the Uganda Rifles, waiving his rank to do so upon the understanding that he was to succeed Captain, now Colonel, Ternan in command of the regiment on that officer's return to Europe—an event which, on account of Ternan's ill-health, was to be expected almost immediately.

My brother had not been three months at home when, on 7th January 1897, he left England for ever. He reached Uganda early in April. Here he found that Ternan did not propose to leave for some time, and Major Thruston therefore proceeded to Unyoro in civil and military charge of that kingdom. Unyoro was comparatively quiet, but certain intrigues and attempts to revolt necessitated two punitive expeditions. These were successful, and he then applied for Kabarega's eight-year-old son to be placed upon the throne of Unyoro. During the four months

he was there before taking over the command of the Rifles from Ternan, Thruston was mostly occupied in organising the garrisons of the various frontier forts, and in endeavouring to ameliorate the hard lot of the troops and people under his charge.

Meanwhile the situation in Uganda was eminently unsatisfactory. The Uganda Protectorate, first a sphere of influence, had become a British dependency, and men of tact, experience, and judgment were required for its administration. The Uganda Rifles, by whom we had gained and held the country, had been harshly treated, overworked, and underpaid. The vacillating policy of the Foreign Office and four years of local misrule had set discontent smouldering throughout the Protectorate, and it was foreseen by all but the Government staff that for a very slight cause discontent would flare into open rebellion.

At this inopportune moment Major Ternan, who, during Mr Berkeley's absence on leave, was acting as Commissioner, collected a large force of the troops for an expedition, entailing a 300 miles' march, against the bow-and-arrow-armed Wa-Kamassia (of whom his force killed two), thus practically leaving Kampala without troops. During his absence King Mwanga fled to Budu and raised a rebellion. Ternan was recalled another 350 miles to put it down, but on his departure it soon broke out again, and Toro, Singo, and Usoga began to give trouble.

At this very juncture Ternan received instructions from the Foreign Office to supply 300 troops at Mau, 300 miles distant. He made no protest, however, and selected three of the companies, who had already just completed a 700 miles' march, for the purpose, and sent them again by forced marches to the Mau. He was himself returning home on sick leave, and accompanied some of them part of the way.

Meanwhile, Unyoro was quiet and the garrison contented, despite their hardships, and Thruston, far away from Kampala, heard but little of the troubles till he arrived there in September, having left Unyoro on 27th August to take over the command of the Rifles. He found the troops disorganised, and the country so disturbed that he expected to have to take the field at once. He at once set about reorganising and recruiting to endeavour to replace the men sent to the Expedition. On 5th October, news came of the mutiny of the Rifles who had joined Macdonald's expedition at the Ravine. Though the news was mainly from native sources and imperfect, Thruston at once recognised the gravity of the situation, and knowing the temper of the Soudanese, and the possibility of the Mohammedan Waganda joining the mutineers, and a consequent uprising of the country against the English, he at once prepared to start for Lubwa's, about 66 miles from Kampala, on the way

* For the so-called Italian Boundary Expedition under Major Macdonald,

towards the Ravine, and at the entrance to Uganda, where he would intercept the mutineers. He was implored not to go, as, unless he succeeded in inducing them to return to their duty, his fate was certain death and possible torture. However, he was the Commandant, and one of the few Arabic scholars, and he knew the Soudanese well. It was the only chance to avert a terrible peril from Uganda. Before starting he left full instructions with Captain Malony, his adjutant—whose brave application to be allowed to accompany him he was unable to accept, as both could not be spared from headquarters—as to what was to be done whilst he was at Lubwa's, and in certain eventualities.

This done, Thruston left, with only five men, on 9th October, for Lubwa's, where he arrived on the 11th. Here the garrison fell at his feet and swore allegiance. He at once sent a letter to Captain Woodward, whom he believed to be in command of the column of the Macdonald expedition that was pursuing the mutineers, giving him instructions to come immediately to Lubwa's by the shortest route, and to inform the mutineers that he, Thruston, had full powers to treat with them, and if they came to him quietly, they would not be obliged to go with the Macdonald expedition, but should rejoin the Government service. This letter reached Macdonald the next day, when he was near the Sio river, and three days before the advance guard of the

mutineers arrived at Lubwa's. No steps were, however, taken to carry out its suggestions, and all mention of it is omitted from the despatches as published.

The mutiny had occurred near the Ravine on 21st September, and the deserting mutineers had since been followed by a column of the expedition with 10 European officers, 18 Sikhs, and several Maxims, and 340 armed Swahili. Between three and four o'clock on the morning of Sunday, 17th October, the advance guard of the mutineers were treacherously admitted into the fort by a few of the garrison. As far as will ever be known, my brother, hearing a noise, ran out of his house, and meeting the mutineer officers and their men, began to speak; but at a sign from a native officer he was seized from behind and overpowered, and, with Mr Wilson, put into chains. The garrison, hitherto in the main loyal, were then intimidated into joining the mutineers.

Major Thruston's and Mr Wilson's quarters were looted and occupied by the native officers, and their servants forced to wait on their new masters. But little of the property taken was ever recovered; Major Thruston's compass and chain were found, after one of the subsequent fights, round the neck of a dead mutineer, who had evidently worn them as a charm—a charm, however, that did not avail to save him from the death he had so fully deserved. Belal Effendi, the leading spirit of the mutineers, appropriated my brother's revolver

and belt, and they were found on him when, more than a year later, he was shot by a patrol under Lieutenant Price, of the Beloochees. Mr Wilson's Bible was recovered from a servant, and that is all.

In the meantime the pursuing column, with Major Macdonald in command, and accompanied by Mr Jackson, the acting Commissioner of the Protectorate, an excellent sportsman and naturalist, but who seems to have lacked the ability, decision and firmness of character necessary to deal with emergencies, was marching slowly towards Lubwa's, and on Monday, the 18th of October, arrived and camped on the hill about a mile and a quarter from the fort, of the seizure of which and of the officers they had heard the preceding evening. Early in the afternoon about a hundred of the mutineers came out to the camp, avowedly to parley, presumably to reconnoitre. The parley resulted in nothing. Neither Mr Jackson nor Major Macdonald offered any pardon to the native officers, or any ransom or distinct terms for the release of the prisoners, but suggested that the latter should be released and the question discussed the next day. That evening a note from Major Thruston to Mr Jackson was smuggled into the camp, in which he stated that he, Wilson, and Scott* were in chains,

* Scott was the engineer of the steam launch, who arrived in it at Lubwa's after the fort was in possession of the mutineers, and seeing the Union Jack still flying, put in and was captured.

and told him not to fight unless attacked; asked him to treat for their release, but not to let any considerations for their safety be allowed to interfere with his plans. A crude message saying that negotiations were on foot for their release was sent back by the same messengers. No definite terms nor offer of ransom was sent by flag of truce or by the friendly Soudanese in camp to the mutineers. In the fort the mutineers were wavering whether they would not tie up the native officers and release the English ones.

The next day (19th October) the mutineers came out in force, and a severe engagement took place; both sides lost heavily. Lieutenant Feilding, gallantly leading his men, was killed; Mr Jackson, severely wounded; the mutineers were defeated, but owing to an insufficient supply of ammunition, were not pursued into the fort. That afternoon a deputation came from the mutineers to offer, if their lives and an enquiry into their grievances were assured them, to give up the English prisoners. Macdonald refused, and demanded unconditional surrender. No reason or justification was ever given for this sacrifice of the lives of three Englishmen.

To return to the fort. The native officers felt themselves in a dangerous position. The rank and file, always half-hearted in the mutiny, were more than ever inclined to make terms for themselves by releasing the prisoners, and Macdonald's

message left no hope for the native officers. Bilal Effendi, Mabruk, and other of the native officers having, it is said, either refused to join in the butchery, or, unaware that it was to take place, had the three Englishmen brought out—some witnesses say to the shore of the lake—and ordered the men to shoot them. Major Thruston told them not to shoot, and his order, even then, was obeyed. He then said to Bilal, "If I am to be shot, shoot me yourself, Effendi, and do not tell the men to do it. But I warn you, that for every Englishman you kill, ten of his countrymen will take his place, and you will be punished." Upon this Bilal raised his rifle to shoot Major Thruston, who put it to his forehead; Bilal shot, and my brother's sacrifice was complete. Poor young Wilson, who had stood unflinchingly by him, was then shot, mercifully through the heart. Scott made a desperate attempt to escape, but the mutineers, now fully committed, shot him also. My brother was not thirty-three years old.

In an article in *Macmillan's Magazine*, Major Mockler-Ferryman, of the Oxfordshire Light Infantry, says :

"Why Thruston, knowing that nothing but his death would satisfy the mutineers, should have troubled himself as to the manner of it would seem strange to any unacquainted with his nature. His sense of justice was, however, only equalled by his fearlessness, and though it is impossible to

say what passed in his mind in those last moments, it is more than probable, that he was unwilling that his murder should be laid at the door of the private soldiers, who, he knew, were mere children in the hands of the native officers. The native officers had condemned him; let the chief of them be alone responsible. Such is the opinion of all who knew Arthur Blyford Thruston, the murdered commandant of the Uganda Rifles, who, though only in his thirty-third year, had fought and bled for his country both in Egypt and Uganda, and had nobly risked and lost his life in the endeavour to avert a national disaster."

My brother's last action was a gallant one. He was fully aware of the danger he was going into; when confronted with the news of the mutiny, he recognised what a catastrophe would ensue if the mutineers were allowed, still unreconciled, to enter Uganda. He took every possible precaution to prevent them crossing the Victoria Nile, and gave Captain Malony detailed instructions as to the best measures to be pursued during his absence. This done, he, though ill and in pain, went to meet the mutineers to try and reason with and bring them back to their duty.

The Rev. Arthur Pike who was at the time in Kampala, writes :

"We all felt that Major Thruston died in our defence. He went to meet the mutineers in the hope that he might be able to persuade them to return to their duty, but he knew quite well the risk he was running, and he went into it like the brave soldier he was."

My brother's character was a complex one. On the surface he appeared cynical, but his friends never failed to discern in the man the solid foundations of high ideals. Of ambition, in the ordinary sense of the word, that is, a desire for official or public recognition, he was utterly devoid, even contemptuous. Modest to a fault, he desired no other reward than the satisfaction to be gained from doing his duty in the ideal sense the word "duty" conveyed to him. The thanks of the Foreign Office and many records of official appreciation, were rescued by his mother from the waste-paper basket. He was a dashing soldier, kind but strict, a far-seeing and just administrator, a simple but highly intellectual man. Fearless to the last, he gave his life for others, and proved himself not unworthy of his Regiment and Country. When the troops, of whom he said: "Possibly they are not heroes, but heroes are not required, and in endurance, subordination, patience, and cheerfulness, they are a model to be imitated and admired by every army in the world," murdered their best friend and cut off so brilliant a career, they indeed knew not what they did.

A number of letters of appreciation, kind feeling, and regret have been received from friends, comrades, and official superiors. Amongst others, from Sir C. Holled-Smith, Sir A. Hunter, and Colonel Baillie, his old commanders in Egypt, and the regiment; from Sir Arthur Hardinge, and many others in Africa; and from Lord Salisbury at the Foreign Office. And not

the least grateful to my relatives and myself is the tribute to my brother's qualities shown by the Arabs with whom he had worked when they, on the news of his murder reaching the Egyptian Soudan, came and asked if it was indeed true that their just friend had been so cruelly killed, and expressed their unfeigned sorrow and indignation. He has hinted in his narrative that flattery is not an unknown art among the Bedawin ; but there is nothing to be gained by flattery to the dead ; it was their genuine feeling, and no conventional compliment.

Thruston's brother officers, ever appreciative, and recognising his courage and self-sacrifice, have erected a monument to him in the crypt of St Paul's Cathedral, so that the memory of his short career will be guarded in that sanctuary, the last home of so many of England's sons who have lived and died for Duty.

Inscription on the monument :—

In Memory of

ARTHUR BLYFORD THRUSTON, Brevet-Major, Oxfordshire Light Infantry. Who served with distinction in the Dongola and Unyoro Expeditions, and who, as a last service to his country, when the lives and supremacy of the English in Uganda were in peril, went, single-handed, to endeavour by his personal intervention to recall to their duty the mutineers of the Uganda Rifles, by whom he was murdered at Fort Lubwa's, East Africa, 19th October
1897. *ÆTAT* 32.

Erected by his brother officers of the Oxfordshire Light Infantry
as a mark of esteem and affection.

AFRICAN INCIDENTS

PART I

CHAPTER I

THE EGYPTIAN ARMY

Life at a Depôt—Professional Zeal in Egypt—A Dinner with the Khedive—The March to Kossier—The Capture of Tokar—Suakin—Red Sea Ports—Tokar—The Bedawin—Nafar Mahmoud—Ameer of Kokreb—Patrol to Sinkat—Tewfik Bey's Defence and Death—The Ride to Disibl—The Affair at Haretin—Return to Suakin—Triumphal Procession—Building a Blockhouse at Oshid—Osman Digna resents it—It is Reinforced—Nafar Surrenders—Oshid is Abandoned—The Sirdar Arrives—Cavalry Demonstration—Death of Hamid Hassin Anob—I Leave Egypt.

MR SPECTATOR has told us that "he has observed that a reader seldom peruses a book with pleasure till he knows whether the writer of it be a black or a fair man, of a mild or a choleric disposition, married or a bachelor, with other particulars of the like nature that conduce very much to the right understanding of an author," and then he has proceeded "to do himself the justice to gratify this curiosity which is so natural to a reader."

Although it is our fortune to live in an age in

which curiosity into private life and love of personalities have to be gratified by many sixpenny newspapers, I have noticed that this curiosity is concerned only with distinguished persons, or with those, whether distinguished or not, who are titled or are wealthy. It would therefore be highly unbecoming in me, with no prospect of, nor even wish for either distinction, wealth, or title, to follow even so eminent an example; nevertheless, I must ask the indulgence of the reader to allow me to tell the story of the causes which have led to my taking part in the events I am about to relate, though the story can possess no interest of its own, still, *mutato nomine*, a similar one has probably compelled many others besides myself to leave the ordinary groove of garrison life, to seek a livelihood under less pleasant conditions. On joining the army, though I found that the professional duties were tedious, still they were only an episode in a daily life which was otherwise very pleasant. I passed four years in this way very contentedly, and then found myself at the depôt of my regiment.

Nothing in military life can be more agreeable than service at a country depôt. Perhaps rather I should say could have been, for then Galba had not arrived, and Gaeticulus still reigned at the Horse Guards. One rolled out of bed at half-past nine, and, for appearance sake, one put on uniform. After breakfast perhaps half an hour's administrative work had to be done, but by luncheon-time one had read all

the newspapers, and had resumed civilian garb; after luncheon, in the summer, one either boated on the Thames, or rode, or drove to a garden party, or to Oxford to see a cricket match, or some other diversion. Then came dinner and a rubber of whist, or a quiet game of vingt-et-un or poker; then bed, and the sound sleep which follows a day well spent. London, too, was an hour and a half's journey, and London has many attractions; and so have Sandown and Kempton Park; in the winter there were four packs of hounds and many hospitable country houses, where one could dine and sleep, and hunt the next day.

Unfortunately, all these laudable and innocent amusements require money, and as my supply was small, I soon had come to the end of it. Something had to be done. It appeared as if I should have to work; there was no prospect in the world that I dreaded so much, but it seemed inevitable. Then it occurred to me that the pay of an English officer in the Egyptian army was sufficient to live upon, that if I could be quartered in Cairo, life would be fairly easy, for the climate was genial, and I should ride on parade, instead of being compelled to walk. This would be much less trouble, and I always loved the Arab horse. There happened to be some vacancies at the time, and by the kindness of Sir Francis Grenfell I was given an appointment.

The Egyptian army was very different from what

I had expected. Only the headquarter staff and two Egyptian regiments were stationed in Cairo. No doubt the officers, who were fortunate enough to belong to them, passed a very pleasant time, but the rest of the army was distributed between the Upper Nile and Suakin. Neither of these districts could possibly be considered a pleasure resort, and neither had any resources of its own; nothing therefore remained for the garrisons to do except to work hard, and this every one did—English, Egyptians, and Soudanese. Naturally, people's thoughts ran much in a groove, and their conversation was in like manner limited, and consisted entirely of professional subjects, and of the doughty deeds of individuals against the Dervishes; every one seemed to conspire to praise his neighbours and himself, except a few black sheep, who were utterly damned of the rest.

I had been educated in my regiment to think that any one who talked shop was an insufferable bore who should be promptly suppressed, and that any one who openly expressed a hope that he would ever be a general was both a fool and a visionary; but in Egypt opposite opinions prevailed, and any one who did not profess the utmost zeal was considered a pariah.

I arrived in the beginning of 1890. In the previous summer Sir Francis Grenfell had conducted his successful campaign which had terminated in the action at Toski. These operations were always colloquially referred to as "Toski time." All my comrades had

enjoyed this time, and I consequently fell in for a full share of their prolix recitations. I soon got to know all the incidents so well that I almost began to believe that I too had taken part in them, and that I too was a very fine fellow: but when I was not under this delusion, when I realised that I had never seen a shot fired except on a rifle range, nor ever wished to see one fired in earnest, I felt myself to be an outsider, and the company and the life I led to be uncongenial. But, looking back, I now see that this tendency on the part of my comrades so to talk was an amiable weakness, and under the circumstances an almost unavoidable one. They themselves, without exception, were all zealous and able men. Possibly they courted fame, but certainly they "scorned delight and lived laborious days." Of those that were with me then some few have courted her successfully, and won her on their merits; others have died of sickness or in battle; but the fate of most of them has necessarily been to remain in the obscurity they dreaded, or at best to shine but dimly.

My battalion was quartered at Assouan. In the summer it is far from being a pleasant abode, for the heat is then always intense; the average maxima in the shade from May to August are over 100° Fahr., and sometimes as high as 120°. Dust storms blow daily, flies abound, and mosquitoes, which are rare elsewhere, and sand-flies make the nights uncomfort-

able. The three winter months, however, are delightful. During the winter the Khedive, Tewfik Pasha, arrived on a tour through Upper Egypt. Great preparations were made, the town was decorated and illuminated, and, according to immemorial custom, the Jawazieh, or "hetairai," dressed in all their best, danced before his yacht. The usual military functions were performed, and afterwards all the officers of the garrison were entertained by His Highness at dinner. This dinner was a very sensible meal, for, as it was a "finger-eating" one, in Mussulman style, it only lasted about half an hour. The guests sat in sixes at several little round tables, and each course consisted of a single dish, out of which each one helped himself by stretching out his hand and pulling out a mouthful. To do this neatly requires a little practice, but, as every one washes his hands and mouth with soap in an ante-room before dining, there is nothing offensive in the custom. There was no wine, and each table was furnished with only one tumbler with water in it. It only requires a little practice to reconcile oneself to this custom, as it also does to that of having one's cigarette lighted by the previous sucking by a servant. As soon as dinner was over the tables were removed, chairs were brought in, and we sat around in a horse-shoe line facing His Highness; we drank coffee and smoked cigarettes while he talked to us, which he did by addressing a kind word to each guest in turn.

This was the last time I saw him, for he died a year after under the treatment of a Greek Sangrado.

In January 1891, after spending a year at Assouan, rumours began to be heard that some forward military movement from Suakin was being contemplated. In February my commanding officer, Major Cunningham, received a telegram which instructed him to march with his battalion to Kosseir, on the Red Sea, as fast as possible, and informed him that he would find a steamer waiting for him which would carry him to Suakin, and that he was to make his own arrangements. I had expected that a large staff would probably have conducted a long correspondence, and made many arrangements slowly, but in Egypt the individual has to rely on himself. So Cunningham telegraphed to the Mudir of Keneh to hire the necessary number of baggage camels, instructed the local government of Assouan to engage a sufficient number of dahabiehs, obtained from the Commissariat a sufficiency of rations and water tanks, and on the morning after the receipt of the telegram we all stepped on board, and began to float down the Nile.

Nothing can be more delightful than such a voyage in February. The sun is genial, the air is brisk and dry, the scenery, if somewhat monotonous, is always beautiful—a strip of brilliant green, a line of palm trees, and behind, the desert, many-hued and shining, while the Nile flows on, placid and

careless, as he has flowed for many thousand years ; it is all the same to him whether he carries pre-historic man or Pharaoh, Ptolemy or Hadrian, Arab or Turk, or Mr Cook's tourist, he will flow on for ever. We ride on him for a season, and pass away and are forgotten, and he seems to rebuke all egotism and hope of fame. All this is very comforting, and helps us to realise that nothing in this world really matters. Those in Egypt seem to have forgotten it, but it is an old truth.

“ τὸ γὰρ θανεῖν
κακῶν μέγιστον φάρμακον νομίζεται ”

(For Death is trouble's sovereign remedy).

We drifted on for four days, then we disembarked at Kufi, and marched twenty-eight miles to an oasis where we bivouacked. The oasis consisted of a few wells, a grove of palm trees, and a few acres of cultivated ground. From this place onwards there was no water, that could properly be described as such, for the rest of the journey. Wells there were, it is true, every twenty miles or so, but after a few gallons had been drawn from the top, the residue was composed more of black mud than of *aqua pura*. The last well before reaching Kosseir was rather better. It had been sunk by General Baird when he marched from Kosseir to Kenah, against General Kleber or Ménou.

The whole of the country we passed through was a bleak desert—sand and stone, and nothing else.

Not a shrub nor a blade of grass existed, but still the scenery was varied and beautiful ; at one moment we saw a pleasing forest glade, trees large and shady, and many a pool of sparkling waters ; then in an instant it was changed again, and there was an open plain, and in the distance a city, with graceful minarets pointing skywards, the domes of mosques, the city walls and battlements, and beneath them lay an army with sheeny spears and flying flags. Very strange and wonderful were the effects of the mirage ; but perhaps they were partly subjective, and we saw what we wished to see when drunk with sun and arid air.

We marched our hundred and ten miles to Kosseir in five days. Kosseir is a quaint, old-world Oriental town, built of coral, and it consists of a tumble-down fort, armed with strange old bronze guns, a house for the Governor, a few others belonging to merchants, and some hovels. The reason for its existence is, that it is the nearest point on the Red Sea from the Nile, and between it and Keneh and Kuft there is a certain amount of trade in camel-borne grain for export to Arabia. We were warmly greeted by the Governor, who was an agreeable and courtly middle-aged Turkish gentleman.

I was afterwards very sorry to hear that the distinction which he made between his private salary and the custom's duties had not met with the

approval of the new-fashioned English auditors, and that he had gone to prison for a while! Poor man! I suppose he is out again now, and I am quite sure he has made enough to live comfortably to the end.

He gave us a letter which our ship, which was waiting for us in the roads, had brought from Suakin. It was to say that Colonel Holled-Smith had not waited for us, but had marched with the Suakin garrison against Tokar; had fought an action; had well beaten Osman Digna and his Dervishes; had driven them out of the country, and was now building a fort, and making arrangements for a permanent occupation.

Cunningham was greatly disappointed, for he had hoped to command his battalion in action, which is an opportunity that comes but seldom. But he bore his disappointment very well; and though he did not say so, I think that he found some consolation in that a number of the headquarter staff, who had swept down from Cairo comfort for a week's picnic, much honour and glory, and "*Chasse aux nègres*" and "*aux decorations*," had undergone the real discomfort of a Red Sea voyage in the Paquebots Postes Khediviales, and had, like us, arrived too late, and would get nothing for their pains.

It has not fallen to many to have been passengers in this obscure but unique line of steamers. To a nautical antiquarian they are of interest from their

being types of the earliest steamers known; to an engineer they would afford both interest and occupation in watching and patching up their poor, old worn-out machinery; but to a navigator they are a standing miracle, in that they are still afloat; for the officer of the watch chooses his tour of duty as the most convenient time for taking his *siesta*, and the man at the wheel lashes it fast, and follows the example of his officer. However, the ordinary passenger knows nothing of these things. I have been in the ship when it has been full of pilgrims, and there was something admirable and pathetic in their calm resignation. The pious Muslim accepts without complaint the bad food, and the dirt, and the lice, and the frequent quarantines. He is in Allah's hands, and Allah, in His inscrutable wisdom, has allowed all these evils, and has preserved the ship, possibly as a chosen vessel for the destruction of His creatures; if he is to be drowned he is to be, and it is not worth thinking about. He has, however, his consolations; five times a day a muezzin from the forecastle chants the call to prayer. "Allah akber!" (God is great); "La illaha il-allah!" (there is no god but God); "Muhammad Rasul allah!" (Muhammad, His prophet. Come ye to prayer, come ye to rest, God is great!). Then a silence falls over the ship, broken only by his melodious song as it travels over the sea—that, the grandest of all God's works, and, in their imagination, like Him, fathom-

less, limitless, and eternal. Everything is His manifestation, and it is in this that lies the beauty and the strength of Islam.

Two days brought us to Suakin. To be quite honest, I must confess that I was rather glad that the expedition was over, and that we were too late, for my personal courage had never been tried, except when at school, and then it had proved to be very inferior. I had, therefore, a vague dread that it might again fail me, and that I might not appear to advantage; so I was relieved to find that it was not to be put to the test. On the other hand, I should have liked to have had it over, and to have known the worst. This is the sort of feeling that drives us to a dentist.

Like all the towns on the east coast of Africa, Suakin presents a very fair appearance from the sea. The houses are built of coral, and are shining white, and the level roof is relieved here and there by a minaret. The town is surrounded by a wall; outside lies a thorny mimosa scrub, which for nine months out of the year is burnt up and brown. This extends inland for about twelve miles, then the coral formation ceases, and the true coast of hills, rapidly rising to a height of three thousand feet, commences. These hills, by reason of their colouring, always save the view from the appearance of ugliness and of desolation, though in themselves they are both ugly and desolate

until one has travelled thirty miles or so inland. There summer rains occur, and some of the valleys are fertile and cultivated, and big thorny trees grow, which, by contrast with the general sterility, appear green and shady. Every one who has lived in Suakin has liked it. It cannot be explained why; for, if the place is analysed, there is nothing in it to like. The country is nearly a desert; the climate is very hot, and rather unhealthy; the town is small and smelly, and communications with the outside world are both slow and uncertain; perhaps, however, its mysterious charm can be explained on this last account.

Very shortly after our arrival, Colonel Holled-Smith with the Sirdar, Sir Francis Grenfell, who had come from Cairo to see what Tokar was like, returned from the wars, and they rode into the town amidst much show of rejoicing on the part of the people, who were probably more actuated by a desire of pleasing those high officials than of pleasing themselves.

Then we settled down to the ordinary routine of garrison life: the weather became hotter and hotter, and those who were able went away to England. I was among the fortunate ones, but August found me on my way out again. As not unusually happens, there was an epidemic of cholera at Jedda, and as the quarantine regulations did not make it worth while for the Postes Khediviales

to run their boats, there was no proper communication between Suakin and the Red Sea ports. The Egyptian War Office consequently occasionally despatched a ship to Berenice to meet another one sent from Suakin, and I happened to be able to catch one of these. When we met the Suakin vessel I was fortunate enough to find on board Colonel Hunter, who was acting as Governor during the absence of Colonel Holled-Smith, who was on a tour of inspection.

On the Red Sea coast there are a large number of small ports or harbours, where a certain amount of trade is carried on with Arabia, chiefly in corn and mother-of-pearl, but, when opportunity offers, a cargo of slaves is not refused. To prevent this latter merchandise, there are scattered about a few police stations under the Suakin administration, and I thus had an opportunity of visiting them. Except for a few curious travellers, I do not think that any Englishmen, other than officials, have ever been there.

Berenice, the first place at which we landed, was in the time of the Ptolemies a flourishing port; there were emerald mines in the neighbourhood, and it was the chief outlet of the export trade from Upper Egypt; even now there is a caravan route from Assouan which is occasionally used. There remain several ruined ancient Egyptian tombs and monuments of the Ptolemaic age, but



MOUNT LONGONOT AND LAKE NAIVASHA.

the town is now buried deep beneath the sand. It is difficult to imagine how a large town could ever have existed, for there is no water to be found for miles, and the whole country is an absolute desert. It would appear, however, that it has, within recent historical times, undergone a process of desiccation, and that the cause of this has been the introduction of the camel, which, being kept in greater numbers than the soil could support, soon exterminated the more succulent and delicate vegetable genera; when these were finished, the less so suffered the same fate, and now there are neither camels nor vegetation left, except in a few oases in the interior. This theory was first investigated by Mr Floyer, and it is borne out by what has happened in Australia, where a somewhat similar result has followed the overstocking of the sheep farms.

From Berenice we went on south to Halaib. The mountains in the background there were extremely grand and desolate, the district itself was not altogether a desert, and consequently a number of Hadendowa Bedawin lived there, who just managed to keep body and soul together by herding their goats and camels.

We then went to a place called Durroor, sixty miles from Suakin. This was, by comparison, a very verdant spot, formed by the delta of a large "Khor" or river bed, and rendered habitable by

the annual early autumn inundations which leave a fertilising deposit.

Shortly before I finally left Suakin I took a week's holiday, and spent it at Dūroor as the guest of my friend, Mr A. B. Wylde, who had been at one time a prominent Suakin merchant, and had then started a cotton plantation in this little oasis. But the harvest was not destined ever to be gathered. The flood had been good, and the young plants were growing fast, and Wylde had completed a comfortable little house of grass, built after an Abyssinian model, with another one close by for his Greek assistants, two weird and ancient men, worn out by want of success, Red Sea climate, and alcohol. He had made a garden, fenced it round, and had dug a well. In those days the Dervishes were always with us, but Wylde had forgotten that it was so. One morning shortly after I had left him, a policeman from the neighbouring post warned him that the Dervishes were coming. Wylde, however, did not believe it, and went on with his breakfast; when it was finished he went out to his work, and then he saw a column of dust in the distance. He and the Greeks had just sufficient time to bolt and hide in the long grass, whence to watch the smoke rising from what had been his house. When the Dervishes had gone, they emerged from their hiding-place, borrowed camels, and rode sadly in to Suakin.

But the Greeks' sorrow was not for long; they knew that they ought rather to rejoice at their escape from death and captivity; they determined to do their duty, and they at once set to and had a good drinking bout.

Absinthe and mastic are a sure poison to diseased hearts and livers, and within a week they were both dead men. Wylde gave up farming, and returned to commerce, and I have not yet heard that Duroor has attracted another European colonist.

On arrival at Suakin I found that my battalion had been moved to Tokar. This district is a Duroor on a large scale, and it is the delta of the Khor Baraka which drains the highlands on the south-east of Kassala. For the greater part of the year the bed of the Khor is dry, and water is only to be obtained by digging wells, but, in the early autumn, heavy floods occur, which, emerging from a defile, about twelve miles from the town, flood the plain for the breadth of two or three miles. Not a drop of this water finds its way to the sea, for all is soaked up by the thirsty, sandy soil. The inundated strip of land is very fertile, but, unfortunately, the floods never irrigate exactly the same spot, and of late years the fertile belt has moved, each year about half a mile southwards.

The old Diwan and settlement, which was

captured by the Dervishes, and afterwards retaken by Sir G. Graham, is now a heap of ruins, six miles distant from the present station, while its predecessor is still farther off, and is half buried in sand in the midst of a dreary wilderness of dwarf tamarisks.

In a straight line Tokar is sixty miles from Suakin, but the usual road makes a detour to touch a halfway well. I went by the direct route. The first thirty miles were very pleasant riding, through the plain of mimosa scrub, intersected by deep Khors, in which the verdure is perennial, and the thorny acacias are nearly timber trees; but the last half of the road was very different, as it consisted of sandy dunes covered with tamarisk shrubs. The sand was soft, the going heavy, and a dust storm blew all day long. These dust storms are normal; they blow the whole year round, except on those few days in winter on which it rains. And things are no better in Tokar itself; dust, heat, and flies are perpetual; there are no trees, and no shade, nor any water, except from deep wells, and this, though abundant, is brackish; the nights, however, are cooler than they are at Suakin, and the dust storms often end with daylight.

The sea is twenty miles off, where there is a harbour called Trinkitat, which is a creek inside the coral reef, and is surrounded by miles of sandy salt flats, and of course there is neither water nor inhabitants.

After a few months I returned to Suakin on appointment to the staff. My new duties were to collect information concerning the Dervishes' movements, and in a general way to assist Colonel Holled-Smith in the supervision of the Arab tribes. Though I had not the good-fortune of being in constant communication with him for more than a very short time, still it was long enough to enable me to appreciate fully his great ability and talents, as well as his geniality, and the privilege of his friendship.

The relations of the Bedawin tribes with the Government were rather peculiar. They had long ceased to love the Dervishes, but for fear of them they were unwilling to compromise themselves by declaring their love for us, except quite privately, in the Governor's office. A number of these not very ardent lovers were in receipt of monthly salaries to stimulate their meretricious affection; they took their money, but they gave us nothing in return. When any one of them came to get his pay he was full of protestations of loyalty, and promises of prowess were it to be needed; but if he were asked to give any information of our enemies, he would swear that he knew nothing; and if he were told to go and find out, he would go back to his home in the hills. There he would sit still and do nothing, and the next month he would send a young relation to draw his salary for him. Doubtless, their dealings with the Dervishes were equally unsatisfactory, and they considered both

of us to be nuisances, and only wished to goodness that they might be left alone !

It was the hard fate of the poor Bedawin to try to serve two masters, and to become expert in the art of trimming ; and over and above that, he had to keep alive, which is sometimes a hard matter in that deserted land, and, when the rains fail, and there is no food for man or beast, or when there is no demand for the hire of his camels, an impossible one.

These Hadendowa Bedawin are a very handsome race, most dignified in their deportment, and engaging in their manners. For beauty of line, and for grace of pose, I think that they are unequalled. Brave, too, they can be at times, as Suakin battles taught us, but apparently they do not choose to be so now, for religious fanaticism and race hatred have vanished for the present, and with them the courage engendered of them, so that now in the presence of even an uncivilised enemy they are as a flock of sheep.*

I soon got to know all their sheiks, and I fear that I was imposed upon by them—they are skilled experts in the art of flattery—and that I fell into their toils with my eyes open. I think, however, that no one is quite impregnable to the attacks of this insidious enemy. A careful observer will have noticed how pleased is a London policeman when he is addressed as sergeant, and a prudent one will not fail to meet the “bobby’s” wishes. An agreeable thing is said,

and though one knows it to be false, still one is a little pleased, and, after constant repetition, one begins to believe it, as one would any other lie. Affirmation and repetition are as strong as demonstration to the average mind. From this could probably be traced the success of demagogues, quack doctors, and dogmatic theologians.

The most prominent, and the least subservient of these sheiks, and perhaps the only really estimable one, was a certain Hamid Hassan Anob, who, from being a simple camel driver, had honestly worked his way up to being the chief of his tribe, and who was now a bey, and the most trusted of the Governor's agents. He had, some years previously, been persuaded to undergo the indignity of exhibiting himself as a "wild Hadendowa," at a place of amusement in London, and after it all had been robbed of his earnings by an Englishwoman. It will not, therefore, be astonishing to hear that he never wished to return to England; indeed, very few Orientals (if we except Indian princes who have been educated in Western ideas) are able at all to appreciate our country, people, or civilisation. As for the country, like many of ourselves, they naturally, even in summer, detest the climate; the people they consider to be ugly, ill-mannered, and unclean—all of which they truly are; the civilisation they cannot understand, and, judging by its effects on its exponents, they hold it to be a very poor thing.

The capture of Tokar had had a very good effect, and had at once induced most of the sheiks, who had hitherto held aloof from us, to make their submission. But a few malcontents still remained, of whom the most powerful was a certain Nafar Mahmoud, who was the third son of the sheik of an unimportant tribe called Mahmoud. This sheik had recently died a very old man; he had, in the pre-Mahdi period, served the Government well, and had eventually been made a pasha, and appointed guardian of the Suakin-Berber Road. During his latter years his duties had been performed by his eldest son, who had thus obtained the cognomen, Darab Kati, or the highwayman, from the zeal with which he persecuted the robbers, who, in those primitive parts, considered themselves members of a legitimate profession, and under his oppression to be the victims of a brigand. I do not think the second son, Muhammad, ever did anything except take to drink. One night he had performed an orgie with the prefect of the police, and had left him, *pour cuver son ivresse*, in the small hours of the morning. Now this orgie was a commonplace affair, but it was an important one for poor Muhammad; and as for myself, it was the indirect cause of my writing this book. Every one who has had any experience of it knows that, though getting drunk may be a very pleasant operation, getting sober, as my Uncle Toby said of something else, is no laughing matter. So, when Muhammad woke from his drunken sleep, the full

force of the disgrace, the loss of dignity and of manhood involved in the bestiality of drunkenness dawned upon him, as, no doubt, it must have often done before; he realised that sin was its own punishment, and that to regain grace an expiation was necessary. He would never drink again, nor smoke (the Dervishes, in common with the Quakers, hold that it is not that which entereth, but that which proceedeth from the mouth of man that defileth), but he would pray and fast and fight for the faith. This time, however, he acted on his good resolutions. He got on his camel, and, taking his young brother Nafar with him, he rode off to Khartoum. Darab Kati, too, fell under suspicion; but he was a trimmer, and he only went half-way, and joined his tribe in the mountains.

Muhammad was received with great distinction by the Khalifa, who sent him back to the Suakin district to make war on the infidels, where he was soon killed whilst attacking a police post. His brother Nafar was appointed Ameer of Kokreb, which is a well half-way to Berber on the caravan route. There he engaged himself in collecting tolls from all the merchants that passed, and in bullying the neighbouring tribesmen.

Early in May 1892 we heard that he had, with a considerable following, been levying blackmail from some friendly Arabs at Sinkat. I was therefore despatched with the irregular Arab cavalry, some foot-

policemen, and a section of the Egyptian Camel Corps Company to go to Sinkat, to find out what Nafar was doing, and to come back to report. The night before I started I dined with Colonel Holled-Smith, and he made a jesting remark about a subaltern's taking the field with an army composed of the three arms, even if it only amounted altogether to fifty men. The words "taking the field" set me a-thinking. I started off delighted at getting out of Suakin, at the prospect of shaking up my liver, and of enjoying a change of scene and air.

Two days' march brought me to Sinkat. This district is a large open plain away among the hills, at an elevation of 3000 feet. It is well watered by a number of wells, and there is a comparatively large population, and many herds of goats and cattle.

Before the Mahdi's rebellion it used to be the summer quarters of the Suakin Administration, and there were several private houses and gardens, and a large diwan, or block of Government offices.

But nothing now remains except the well and the ruins of the fortified diwan, which was captured in 1885 by Osman Digna after an heroic resistance by ~~the~~ Sub-Governor, Tewfik Bey, who, with the whole of the garrison was killed, when, forced by hunger, he was endeavouring to cut his way through the besiegers, and to reach Suakin.

The now forgotten story of the defence of Sinkat

should in justice confer undying fame on the Egyptian arms, but it has become the custom to depreciate the Fellaheen soldiers for the greater glorification of their Soudanese comrades. I have never been able to trace the reason why; for the battle of Tel-el-Kebir was no disgrace to them, seeing that they were an ill-organised, badly disciplined, and, by comparison, quite untrained force, and that they were opposed to an army that was perfect in every respect, that was everywhere brilliantly led, and commanded by the first of English generals. Even then, though surprised (which was foolish, but not cowardly) and outnumbered (which was their general's fault), when it came to hard-to-hand fighting they made a good resistance, although their chief was a poltroon, and their officers, who are mainly drawn from a different class, and who have none of the virtues of their men, had for the most part run away.

El-Teb, on the Red Sea, however, was a really ignominious defeat, but, though it may appear paradoxical to say so, the honour of the Egyptian army was not affected by it; for, in the first place, only one half of the force were Egyptians at all, and these were not soldiers, but the offal of the prisons, and some *gendarmes*; the remainder were Soudanese regular soldiers. In the second place, they were badly manœuvred. A brave soldier is not necessarily a good general, and the army, when

it was attacked, was in "quarter column," that is to say, in companies one behind the other, at a distance of five yards; they were surprised and had no time to open out, and in this formation there were only four men in each company who could use their rifles, hence their defeat was inevitable.

The Egyptian common soldier is a ploughboy who has been taken by the conscription from his village, where he has left behind his father, his mother, and his young wife, his fields, his house, the few piastres that he has saved, and everything that is dear to him. In the field he is not a volunteer; he is not sustained by pride of race, or of birth, by emulation, or by the hope of distinction and reward. For centuries he has been governed by aliens; patriotism, therefore, as we understand it (which may be perhaps after all but a mixture of vanity and superstition, as some one has defined it), is unknown to him. His whole life is bound up in his village, and his one ambition is to return to it; but, nevertheless, from a sense of duty, of which perhaps he is hardly conscious, he will undergo great fatigues, he will work till he drops, and he will never complain. He is brought into the field to fight, in a quarrel which he does not understand, an enemy against whom he has no personal animus. He hears the bullets whizzing around, occasionally he sees a comrade fall, but he never ducks his head; he stands bolt upright and stolid,

and does what he is ordered. To do this is, of course, nothing at all magnificent, and is no more than the least that should be expected from any soldier; but of late years this is all that he has been asked to do; nevertheless, the histories of the Russian and Wahabi wars, and the defence of El Obeid, Kassala, and Sinkat, show that, in a combination of stubborn courage and persistence, he is not unworthy to rank even with the patriotic Dutch of William the Silent.

At Sinkat I met a caravan of Berber tradesmen, who told me that Nafar was a day's march to the east of Kokreb, and that he had three hundred followers with him. As, however, they were wearing Dervish costume, their sympathies were evidently against us, so I thought it probable that they exaggerated the numbers in order to prevent my going to attack Nafar. As a matter of fact, I had received no instructions to do this, nor had I the slightest intention of so doing, until, on the top of Colonel Holled-Smith's jesting remarks, their news of the near presence of the Dervishes put it into my head, but when once it had got there, the idea seemed feasible; nevertheless, it was outside my orders, and fighting is always more or less dangerous—in fact, always so subjectively—so, on consideration, I thought I would not go. But as in the hunting field when one sees a stiff fence, which it is not necessary to take, and, funking it, one sheers off towards a gate,

and then again changes one's course and goes straight for it, not knowing why, but in reality probably influenced by the pleasure of fear (which is the charm of gambling and of all high play), or perhaps by a sort of despairing fatalism, which is found among the indolent, who are usually too lazy to guide their conduct by reason, so I made up my mind that, come what may, whether my action was approved or blamed, or whether I won or lost, go and fight I would, and see how I liked it, and thus settle the question then and for always.

I then called for a guide. All my men were Bedawin, and they consequently had no wish to kill their countrymen, so, of course, no one knew the road, but I said that I would myself lead them, and just before sunset we started.

I knew that our direction was towards the north-west, so I started off to the south towards a district marked on the map as waterless and difficult. My men had no wish to die of thirst, and, before I had gone a quarter of a mile, one of them said he thought he remembered the road.

We then changed our direction, and we rode on till midnight. I could not manage to keep awake, and I had fallen off my camel twice, and, bruised and scratched, began to think that being on the war-path was not much fun, so I called a halt, and trusting to fortune to take the place of sentries, in two minutes we were all asleep. With the morning

star we were up again, and by ten o'clock had reached the well where Nafar was supposed to be ; but, as he was not there, I said we would water the camels and horses and go on to Kokreb, for there was little inducement to stay where we were. The well was in a deep and narrow ravine, with precipitous walls of disintegrated granite ; the heat of the rocks and sun was intense ; there was not a breath of air, and I was thirsty and tired, and consequently very irritable. My proposal to go on was received by the Arabs with a chorus of protest ; the thing, they said, was impossible, it was suicide ; we should all be killed, and the camels and horses would die of fatigue. I clouted the leader over the head, and exhausted my vocabulary of abuse, so up they mounted, and on we went.

After an hour we came across a Bedawin who said that Nafar was two miles further on, at another well of the same name, and that he had with him a large number of men. On being asked how many, he said they were more than enough to kill us all, and that he had thirty horsemen. I then saw that it would be rash to go on, as my ten Arab horsemen would not fight, nor of course would the footmen, and my twenty Camel Corps soldiers, while mounted, would be defenceless against cavalry, and, when dismounted, would be at a great disadvantage in the narrow ravine, the rocky sides of which would afford excellent cover to Nafar's

riflemen. So I decided to proceed no further, but to make for a well called Disibl, on the Berber road, about sixty miles from Suakin, and half way to Kokreb, and to wait there for something to turn up.

This meant a ride of about twenty miles, which was quite as much as our camels and horses could manage. We reached the well about sunset. Our route at first lay along a rocky valley, but after a few miles we emerged on a broad open plain covered with scrub, aloes, and dried-up grass. The heat was, of course, very great, but the air was dry and bracing, and there was a good breeze; and as they found themselves farther away from the redoubtable Nafar, everybody cheered up a bit.

We stayed at Disibl two days, and on the morning of the third, I received reliable information that Nafar and his force, which consisted of twenty horsemen, about thirty rifles, and a number of spearmen, were at Haretri, another well about twenty-five miles further on towards Berber. Among his rifles were some Soudanese deserters from the Egyptian army.

We saddled up and started away. After fifteen miles or so all my foot Arabs declared themselves to be quite exhausted, and refused to go on. They were no great loss, so I left them behind. My force consisted now of the twenty Egyptian soldiers and the ten Arab horsemen, of whom three were of the

same clan as Nafar, one, indeed, his cousin. Knowing what to expect of them, I reversed the usual rules of tactics, and I made my cavalry march in the rear. When we were within a mile of Haretri they pressed on and tried to pass me, saying that the well in front of us was not the real Haretri, and that they wanted to water their horses, so as to be strong for the fray. I replied that I would water my camels first.

After a few minutes we saw some camels grazing in the distance; then we changed our amble into a fast camel run, and in a few minutes found ourselves in the middle of Nafar's force, who were sleeping under the thorn trees. Their camels were grazing, but their horses were saddled and tethered at a little distance. There was a general stampede. We dismounted and began to fire. They soon rallied and returned it. Then some of their riflemen climbed up the sides of the valley, and began to take pot shots at us, while the remainder got behind some cover and did likewise. Nafar and his horsemen charged, but at about fifty yards from us they swerved off and four of them fell under our fire. It was my first experience of hearing bullets whizzing, and it was rather uncomfortable, more especially as those of the Soudanese deserters were rather better aimed than the rest. These I cursed heartily. But in front of me was a fat Egyptian lieutenant, whose body could be warranted to be impenetrable by any bullet, so I

thought I would get behind him, and then I should be as safe as behind a butt on a range. So I made a few steps in his direction, but "this will never do," I thought; "this is not becoming in Nero. Be a man, Nero." I then stopped, but I had to do something, so I blew my whistle and stopped the firing; then, getting in front of the soldiers, I told them to follow me, and we raced towards Nafar's main body. They fired one volley, and then began to retire slowly. My Fellaheen soldiers pressed hard on me from behind, and kept me moving whether I liked it or not.

Firing as we went, we gradually overtook the Dervishes, who retreated sullenly. One of them stopped and faced me at about a distance of twenty yards, and, kneeling down, took a deliberate aim. I fancied I could see down the barrel. "Damn him, he has got me!" I thought, but in another minute he fell flat on his face, killed by a bullet from my sergeant. On we went. Their retreat became a flight, but, being light of foot and unshod, they soon outpaced the heavy "policeman-booted" Egyptians, and we gave up the chase.

We all thought that we had done enough; so, after watering ourselves and our animals, and filling our waterskins, we remounted and went off with our booty at a brisk trot.

My delight was unbounded. I had been shot at in a mild sort of way, and I had behaved, at least

outwardly, as well as I could have wished. I had surprised Bedawin in their own country, had captured their cattle, killed half a dozen of them, and had had no losses of my own. Nay, more—I was now a blooded hound. Tally ho! I would hunt the fox! Whoō whoop! I would tear him up and eat him!

All this shows how demoralising war is, even when on a very small scale.

I gave vent to my joy in song, and astonished my followers by loudly humming, "Malbrook s'en va t'en guerre" with that complete satisfaction and complacent disregard of tune which is one of the proud characteristics of our race, and one which must excite the wonder and admiration of our neighbours.

On we trotted, and just before sunset I had the satisfaction of meeting my Arab footmen who had refused to go on with me, and of not allowing them, thirsty as they were, to have a drink from our waterskins.

We reached Disibl at about ten o'clock, and, thoroughly worn out with fatigue, hunger, and excitement, I tumbled off my camel and lay down and slept where I fell.

The next day I stayed where I was, though with some reluctance, as Nafar's horsemen had followed us up, and were seen hovering around. I was rather nervous lest they might lay an ambush for us on the

march, and we might lose the fruits of our victory. But the animals needed a rest, and it would not have looked well to have turned away.

At mid-day a messenger arrived from Suakin with an official letter for me to say that the Governor had heard that I had been defeated and captured by Nafar, and again a denial of the report; that he was much annoyed at my exceeding my instructions by not returning from Sinkat, and that he was about to send out a squadron to escort me in, and that I was to place myself under the orders of its commander.

This was rather a damper; but it did not trouble me much, as all is well that ends well, and I had overnight despatched one of my camel-men to report what had really happened, and I confidently expected to be patted on the back, and to be given a decoration. Decorations in those days were very cheap in Egypt. So I sent back word that I was resting after the fatigue of victory, and that when I was sufficiently restored I would return to Suakin.

The next day we started, and on the morning of the second I marshalled my army to make an imposing entrance into the town. The Arab horsemen led the way, looking picturesque on their Dongola ponies and high-backed saddles, and themselves inimitable with their graceful seats and figures and scarlet turbans. Then came myself, riding Nafar's

camel—a blue-blooded animal, famous in the country, which had cost its owner a hundred pounds—then the twenty Egyptian Camel Corps soldiers, and behind them the Arabs, mounted and on foot, leading the captured camels. Altogether, I think that we made a very pretty procession; but greater glory was still to follow. Hamid Hassan Anob had always detested Nafar, and had been jealous of him, and when we were within three miles of Suakin, a crowd of camel riders were seen coming to meet us; these were Hamid and all his followers, dressed in gala costume, and they had come out to crow with us over Nafar's misfortunes. These timely reinforcements quintupled the size of the procession, and riding through the Suakin bazaar I was a proud man.

After my nine days' filibustering in the hills I felt like Cæsar triumphing after nine years of victories in Gaul:—

“Ecce nunc triumphat Cæsar qui subegit Gallias.”

But, like him, I found only my own faction applauding the triumph. The official element was absent, with the exception of an aide-de-camp, who happened to be in the road, and who told me the Governor wished to see me. I hastened into his office, and I was asked what I meant by disturbing the peace of the country, and creating blood-feuds; but I saw that he was not really angry, and, as I expected, I left

the office with an invitation to dinner and a game of piquet.

• Every one without exception was sorry when a few weeks afterwards Colonel Holled-Smith left the Egyptian Service. He was succeeded by Colonel (now Major-General) Hunter, in whom we all found as stout a friend and as capable a commander.

The new governor thought that, as Nafar had been driven away, and the Berber road was now clear of enemies, the time had arrived to extend and consolidate our influence among the Bedawin, by establishing a fort at Oshid, near Disibl, which would protect them from the Dervish raids, and that the making of a market there would be a great convenience to the inhabitants.

So he and I started off to make the fort.

This was in the beginning of July, and the hottest time of the year. It may be remembered that the English navvies employed in 1885 in attempting the construction of the Suakin-Berber railway, felt themselves obliged to strike off work in April owing to the heat. Colonel Hunter and I, however, worked with our hands, laying stones and mixing mortar, for ten hours a day in July, and we felt all the better for it, and, by so doing, the block-house was completed in a week.

All the local sheiks were assembled, and were favoured with the customary and appropriate elo-

quence; the Khedivial standard was then hoisted with as much modest pomp as we could attain to, amid enthusiastic shouts of "*Effendimiz chok Yasha!*" (Long live the Khedive!)

In October rumours reached us that Osman Digna had been much offended by the new fort, and that he was coming to pull it down; so Colonel Hunter sent me with reinforcements and provisions to defend it. Our force was sufficiently large, and we had three months' provisions, and were, for all practical purposes, impregnable. The Dervishes, I suppose, knew this very well, for they never came near us.

After I had been there three days a messenger came to say that Nafar and his followers were coming in to surrender to me, and an hour afterwards they hove in sight, a large cavalcade of horses, camels, and footmen. I shook hands all round, as if we had always been the best friends in the world, and no mention was made on either side of our previous meeting. I then ushered them into my hut, and pressed Nafar to take a seat. It was his own carpet which I had stolen from him. Then began a long talk. Nafar was full of excuses, and of his present delight at returning to our fold, and I replied with a high-flown harangue of welcome, which was interrupted by the arrival of a letter. I opened it, and Nafar smiled, and hoped it contained good news. I said it was of the very best

that it was an invitation from Colonel Hunter, requesting the pleasure of seeing him in Suakin, so as to be able personally to welcome him after his long sojourn in the wilderness. This was a diplomatic fiction, for the real message was one to me to demolish the fort, and to return with the garrison to Suakin, in accordance with instructions received from the Sirdar.

I got rid of Nafar as soon as possible, and packed him off to Suakin. I had no intention, however, of abandoning the fort, for I had just stated to the neighbouring tribesmen, as I had thought that I was authorised to state, that no one need now be any longer afraid of Osman Digna, as we had come to Oshid to stay there; and I had, besides, a faint hope that the instructions might have been given under a misapprehension as to our safety. I therefore kept the contents of the letter secret, and wrote back some weak excuse about the danger of attack during the process of demolition. Hunter referred my letter to the Sirdar, but after a few days a positive order came for me to abandon the place. Still I had a last resource; I sent off to a friendly chief to tell him that I was about to retire from Oshid for a time, and that he must hold the fort, and that he would find in it a large supply of grain. I then sent away the garrison, and remained behind to await his arrival. He came at mid-day; I made

over the fort to him, and he swore to hold it to death; but that evening, so I afterwards learnt, he removed all the corn, and trekked back to his mountain. The next morning Osman Digna came, and pulled down the fort, probably, perhaps with some reason, congratulating himself on being such a formidable personage.

I went back to Suakin, and Osman Digna set to work to kill and rob, and some of his followers even made off with flocks that were grazing under the walls of Suakin itself, killing the small boys who were tending them, we, all the time patiently waiting for permission to despatch an expedition against him, but we waited in vain.

Osman Digna then went to Sinkat, and burnt Hunter's hut, and then on to Eskoweit, further in the hills, and did the same there, and destroyed his garden. Thence Osman went to Tokar, raided the district, and killed many of the agriculturists, but was eventually driven off by Captain Machell, who was in command there.

We tried to hunt him with the cavalry, but as he always had some hours' start of us, he invariably managed to get away into the hills, whither we were not allowed to follow him, and whence, on our departure, he would return for another raid.

In November the Sirdar came to Suakin. I suppose that among uncrowned heads there is no greater personage in the world than an Egyptian

Sirdar in the provinces. Triumphal arches are erected, the streets are decked with flags, and are illuminated at night. Every one with any pretence to respectability, official or civil, Egyptian, Arab, or English, dressed in his best, waits at the quay to meet him. There is a guard of honour of a hundred men, and a salute is fired from the battery. Afterwards, at least one levee is held, and the whole community has to attend it. At night there is a reception, and, as the Sirdar enters, every one rises as if to meet a royalty, and a band strikes up a sirdarial hymn!

The Sirdar arrived, and all these imposing ceremonies took place. The merchants presented him with an address in which the injury to trade caused by Osman Digna's presence was hinted at. The Government had prohibited serious hostilities, but it was decided to make a demonstration.

Osman Digna was 20 miles due north of Sinkat. So a large cavalry and camel corps' patrol, which I accompanied, was despatched to Sinkat, and from thence it marched 20 miles due south, and thence back to Suakin. I fear that the Dervishes were not sufficiently impressed by this demonstration, for, a few weeks afterwards, Osman Digna, taking advantage of Colonel Hunter's temporary absence, rode on his donkey past the Suakin gate within 3 miles of the city walls.

It would appear at first sight that the Egyptian



SUAKIN HILLS. BETWEEN ESKOWET AND SINKAL. 1-1 OCTOBER 1891.

military authorities showed a want of energy and a lack of confidence in their own troops in allowing Osman Digna to roam about the country practically without opposition. But it was not so. The Egyptian Government had decided, and now I think wisely so, that it could not extend its responsibility to the hill country, that therefore military operations should be confined to the plains, that they should be simply defensive, and not of a description to invite retaliation, and so possibly to lead to a long and expensive war. The time had not then arrived for the reconquest of the Soudan.

Immediately after the return of the cavalry patrol the Sirdar returned to Cairo, and shortly afterwards I was transferred to a battalion on the Upper Nile, and in the spring resigned my appointment in the Egyptian Army. But before leaving Suakin I had to say good-bye to my friends the sheiks, of whom the most valued was Hamid Hassan Anob. He had been very ill, and was now dying. I went into his hut; he held out his hand and smiled, and said he was sorry I was leaving. I said I hoped I might come back again some time and find him strong and well. He then said that I should never again see him in Suakin, but that he hoped that we would meet together in the "Garden." Good-bye, Hamid, you have fought a good fight, you have run your course, you have kept your faith. But is there a Garden for either you or me? I know not; I think that I hope not. After

life's fitful fever to sleep well would be very sweet.

Early in May I embarked at Alexandria, and, on rounding the breakwater, I threw, somewhat ungratefully, but without a shadow of regret, my Tarboosh into the sea.

PART II—UGANDA

INTRODUCTION TO PART II

MAJOR THRUSTON'S own narrative leaves little to add to the account of his career in the Egyptian army except to explain a little more fully his reason for resigning his appointment.

He has touched very lightly upon the evacuation of Oshid, but he at the time deeply felt that he had been made the instrument of an unworthy policy in being first instructed to assure the friendly Arab tribes around that place that the Egyptian flag there erected should there remain, and that under its protection they might dwell in peace, and then ordered to abandon the fort, and leave these same Arabs to their fate, who, having by their friendliness to Egypt incurred Osman Digna's hostility, had everything to fear from him and his followers. The Government had, as the Arabs say, "blackened his face" in the eyes of these Arabs, who do not easily distinguish between the agent and principal. Their fate saddened him, so little seemed needful to prevent it. With a few more men, or even the garrison only, he was prepared to hold Oshid, and defend

them against Osman Digna and his raiders. The Sirdar thought otherwise, and Thruston therefore took the only course by which he could show the Arabs that he at least was no party to their betrayal, and resigned his Egyptian commission.

On his return to England, in the end of May 1893, he at once went to his home in Wales to enjoy a well-earned rest. There his time was spent in the calm and quiet of the country, in fishing and study. His active and stirring life in the Egyptian army had made the idea of a return to regimental work somewhat distasteful, and before his leave was over he began to look for a fresh field for his active mind, and one that would give him a larger scope for useful work than the routine of a regiment at home in times of peace. His regiment was very dear to him, the society of his brother officers congenial, but he felt that under wider conditions he would have better opportunities for usefulness, and, therefore, a few days only after his contract with the Khedive had formally ended, he accepted an appointment on the Uganda Commission, and left England for Africa.

Africa seems to exercise a strange and unaccountable fascination on all who sojourn on that continent, and Major Thruston was no exception. From the time he landed at Zanzibar till his death, Africa and the welfare of its people occupied the largest place in his thoughts.

To understand the events described in Part II., a short

sketch of the history of Uganda and of the Soudanese troops, by whom our supremacy in the Protectorate was, until the autumn of 1897, solely upheld, will be useful.

Uganda proper is a province of a curved oblong shape, marching for about 100 miles with the north side of Lake Victoria. To the north of it lie Toro and Unyoro from west to east, on the west Toro and Ankole, and on the east the Victoria Nile and Usoga. The kingdom of Uganda, about twice the size of Ireland, includes the provinces of Budu, Singo, Ankole, and Usoga. The kingdom of Unyoro is about the size of Ireland, that of Toro about a quarter of its size. The Protectorate includes all three kingdoms which we really do rule, as well as the undefined regions of Nandi and Kavirondo. Over the two latter, though titular owners, our actual control is limited to within a few days' march of the various small garrisons stationed to protect the road to Lake Victoria. The Protectorate is thus roughly enclosed by the Egyptian Soudan and the British East African Protectorate to the north, by Lake Victoria and the German territory on the south, and by the British East African Protectorate on the east.

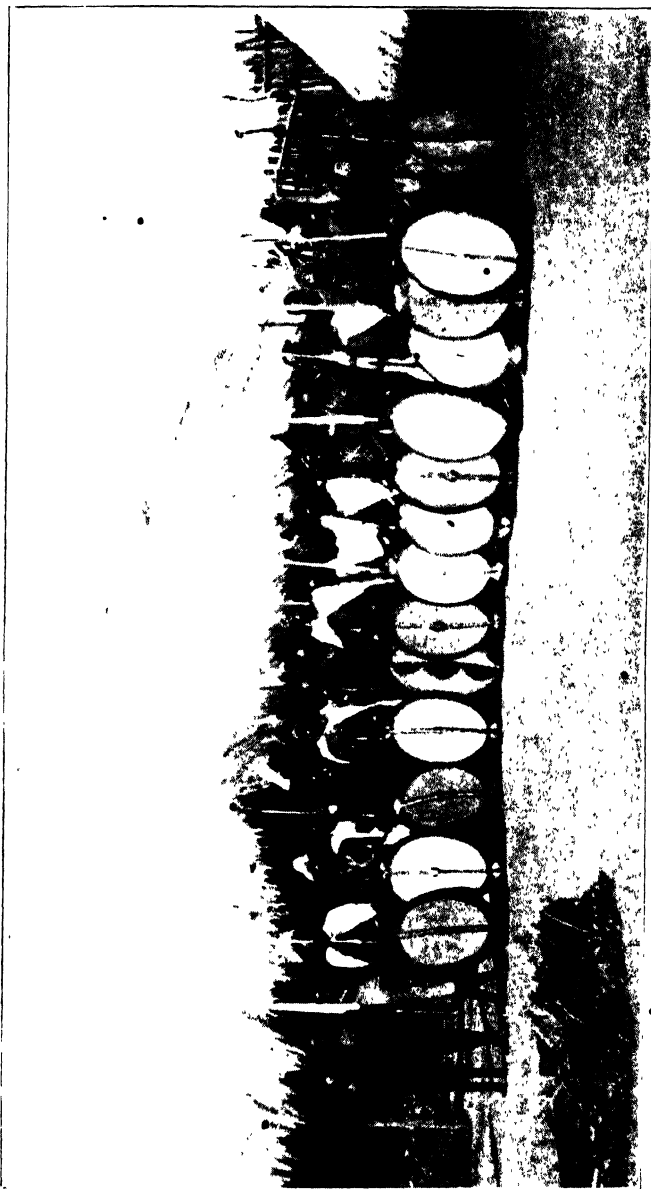
The country is well populated in places, and in parts fertile and well cultivated. Ten years of missionary effort have given the three kingdoms something of Christianity, the elements of educa-

tion, and a thin veneer of civilisation. The Protectorate is ruled by Downing Street, and is directly administered by a Commissioner, who with a staff of officials advises the native kings and chiefs, and enforces his views, when necessary, with the help of the Uganda Rifles.

The first that is known of the kingdom of Uganda is from the accounts of Speke and Grant, who visited it in 1862. They found a well-nigh despotic king, Mtesa, of an ancient dynasty, and a system of law and government greatly resembling the feudal system in Europe in its earlier developments. The people were well clothed, and had some knowledge of smelting; the roads were good, and the swamps bridged. The court ceremony was both elaborate and grotesque.

After this Uganda was visited from time to time by various travellers and traders, and their glowing reports attracted the attention of the British public. The Church Missionary Society established a station, and two years later a French Romanist mission followed its example. In 1890 Captain, now Colonel, Lugard, was sent by the I.B.E.A. Company to make a treaty with Mwanga, the successor, though not the immediate one, of Mtesa.

In this he succeeded. Mwanga signed the treaty, and, little by little, under Lugard's fostering care, the I.B.E.A. Company became the 'paramount authority. It is not intended here to give the



GROUP OF A TRIBE OF THE MASAI IN WAR KIT. TWO HEAD-DRESSES ON LEFT OF LION SKIN.

history of Colonel Lugard's successful military expeditions, nor of the difficulties he had to contend with from the intrigues and feuds of missionary and Muslim, Pagan and self-seeker. Suffice it to say that the loud outcries of the French mission as to its imaginary wrongs compelled the attention of the Foreign Office, and an enquiry was decided on. Captain, now Colonel, J. R. Macdonald, was at this time employed on the survey of the proposed railway from Mombasa to Lake Victoria, and probably for the reason that he was thus close at hand the Government lit upon him as a fit person to make the report. He went to Kampala for the purpose, and remained in the country for some time. Meanwhile the I.B.E.A. Company had discovered that it was beyond their resources to continue the occupation of Uganda, and decided, without loss of time, to abandon it. Colonel Lugard, aware of the danger this would entail on the European community, and also feeling certain that Germany or France would quickly constitute themselves heirs to the defunct company of this, perhaps the fairest part of tropical Africa, hastened to England to lay the facts before both the Government and people.

In consequence of these representations and those of the missions and of others interested, the Government decided to assume the charge of Uganda for a time, until its own officials could report on the policy of retaining or abandoning the country, and

sent out, in 1893, Sir G. Portal to report on the question. Sir Gerald arrived at Kampala in the end of March 1893, and on 1st April (*absit omen*) raised the Union Jack, and proclaimed Her Majesty's Protectorate over the kingdom. He made an exhaustive report, full of valuable suggestions for the development of the country, unfortunately, for the most part completely neglected by his successors, and advised the retention of Uganda by the Imperial Government.

Sir Gerald's work, however, was suddenly cut short, for, overcome by the shock of his brother's death, he left Kampala on 30th May 1893, just at the moment when the discontents of the Muslim Waganda rendered the presence of an able and impartial man especially necessary.

For some reason Portal appears to have objected to leave in charge of the new Protectorate, pending the arrival of his successor, any of the officials late in the employ of the I.B.E.A. Company, and accordingly appointed Captain Macdonald, who had not been in the Company's service, as acting commissioner, leaving with him very complete instructions as to the line of policy he was to pursue.

Macdonald ignored these, however, and followed a line of his own, and Portal had not gone 150 miles on his journey to the coast when news reached him that troubles had broken out in Kampala; he delayed his journey, and sent a reinforcement to the capital.

However, on learning that Captain Macdonald had joined with the Protestant faction, and had triumphed over the Muslims, Portal, seeing that at any rate the Europeans had the upper hand, and were not in danger, went on his way home. On his first arrival in Uganda he had applied to the home Government for some officers to assist him, and these were now sent out. Colonel, now Sir H., Colvile, and three other officers arrived in Uganda in November 1893, and Colonel Colvile assumed the commissionership. His term of office was marked by the invasion of Unyoro, the kingdom of Kabarega. This personage, whose name has become more familiar to the public than perhaps that of any other African chief, except, indeed, his bloody majesty of Benin, has from the first been a troublesome person to every European who has come in contact with him. Sir Samuel Baker, when he visited Kabarega's country as an explorer, and again as an Egyptian official, found him both treacherous and cruel.

It must be acknowledged that Kabarega's policy was, from his point of view, a very sound one, namely, to prevent any European setting a foot in the country, or, having done so, from keeping it there. His means were doubtless archaic—poison, starvation, and secret murder. But his conviction that once let an European get established in the country and good-bye to native rule, to the indepen-

dence of his kingdom, and even his own freedom, has been fully justified by the event. As a prisoner at Mombasa he has now, (1899) ample leisure to reflect on his past.

Gordon had intended annexing both Uganda and Unyoro to Egypt, and erected some forts on the frontiers of the latter kingdom, but the advance of the Dervishes diverted the attention of the Egyptian Government from Unyoro, and left Kabarega free to harry his neighbours of Uganda who, he said, had betrayed their common interest by admitting, for the sake of their beads and their cloth, the Europeans into the country.

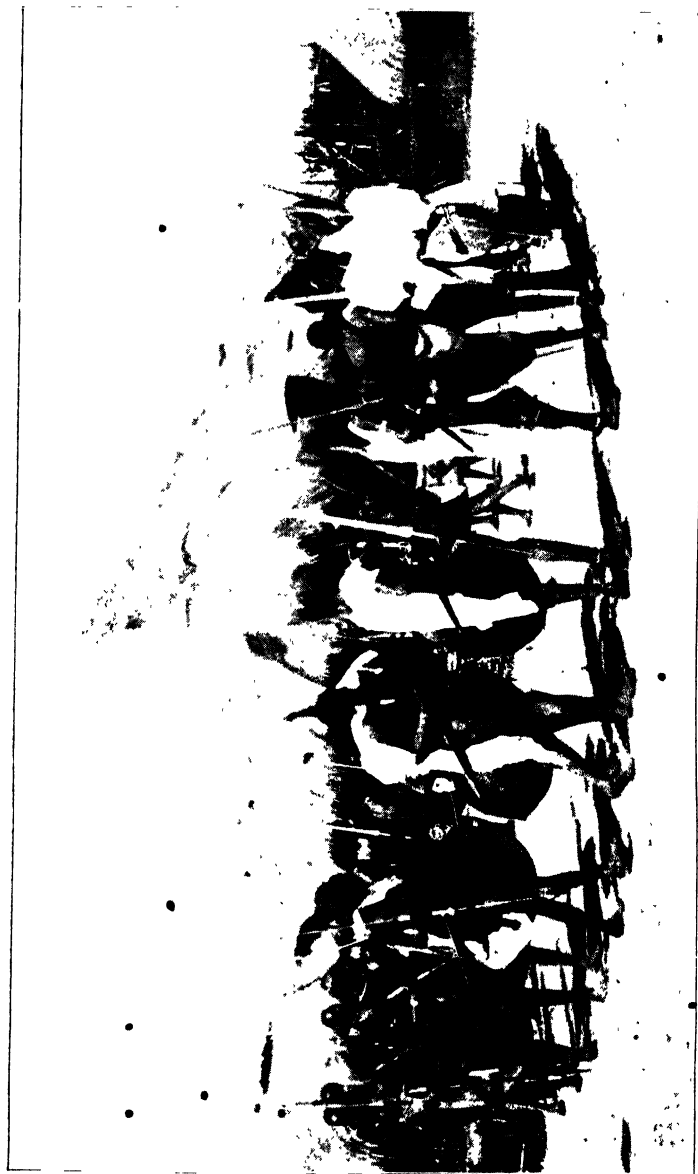
From this state of things it naturally followed that when Colvile took over charge of the Protectorate, he found that the frontiers of Uganda were continually being raided; in these raids now the Waganda were successful in repulsing the Wunyoro, and carrying the war into the enemy's country, and then the Wunyoro drove back the Waganda.

Colvile having collected the whole Uganda army, and every Soudanese soldier possible, started on the expedition that is described in this part of the "experiences." The troops called sometimes Soudanese or Nubians, but known officially as the Uganda Rifles, without whom the invasion of Unyoro would have been impossible, consisted of the remains of the garrisons of Hât-el-Estiva in the Equatorial provinces of Egypt.

Separated from Egypt by the Mahdist invasion, and the taking of Khartoum, they remained under Emin Pasha. Emin states that his regiments were composed in part of Egyptians and men of mixed Arab race, but mainly of negroes and negroids, many of the officers being Egyptians or mongrel Turks. The Turks, Egyptians, and men of mixed Arab race, he speaks of as, "untrustworthy, tyrannical, venal, deceitful, and slave dealers." This is what might be expected, for with the Egyptians, service in the Equatorial provinces was regarded much as banishment to Siberia is thought of in Russia. Officers and men were sent there as a punishment, or on account of their general unfitness. But with the negroes and negroids it was very different. More than two-thirds of Emin's soldiers consisted of the latter directly enlisted from his own provinces. Though many of the remainder had come from Egypt, they were mostly of a like origin, old soldiers, torn from their homes in their youth by the slave raiders, and bought from them in the markets of Khartoum and Dongola into the Egyptian army. In it they were well-drilled. Long years, however, spent in the Equatorial provinces had relaxed their discipline, and made them forget, or remember only to dread, Egypt. They were still, however, ardently attached to its flag, and the prestige it conferred. They were drawn chiefly from the tribes of the Makraka, Lataka, Monboddu, Dinka, and Shilluk.

The Makraka, formerly a part of the cannibal Zande, or Niam Niam tribes, situated W.S.W., were driven out by the exactions of their chiefs some four or five generations ago, and, travelling east, settled in the Province east of the White Nile, which bears their name. Their migration was easy, for the inhabitants, terrified by their reputation as cannibals, fled before them. They are of distinctly negro type, well-formed and powerful, subsisting principally on Manioc and other roots introduced by them from their former country. Their appetite, however, is omnivorous, and they eat even grubs with relish. Their women are allowed great freedom, and exercise considerable influence, a very unusual state of things amongst the kindred tribes.

The Lataka are favourably described by Sir S. Baker as having a very fine physique, and being excellent porters. He says except their woolly hair they have little resemblance to the true negro, the negro lips and nose being entirely absent. By language and feature they are apparently allied to the Masai, whose warlike habits and raids are now so well known by the descriptions of travellers from the east coast to Uganda. How they came to be settled in the borders of Laḡo does not appear, nor whether they or the Masai are the parent stock. These, and the other tribes mentioned, whose characteristics being very similar it is not necessary to detail, form the bulk of the Soudanese



MASAI WAR DANCE.

soldiery. All these tribes are heathen, their religion consisting for the main part in an ardent belief in witchcraft. The Soudanese soldiery have, however, embraced the creed of their masters, Islam, but of a very degraded type; drunkenness is common, and not thought disgraceful, and their religious practice is confined to a few ceremonies and formulas.

Emin, who had twenty years' experience, says of his Soudanese soldiers that "Though not exactly angels, and though now and then they made the people work for them—they are but negroes—still they are used to discipline, and as far as the treatment of the people is concerned, and the good terms they are on with them, they deserve nothing but praise."

Gordon spoke of them and their services in most unqualified praise. In his "Life" it is said: "He could only rely on the small body he had left of the black Soudanese, whose loyalty and devotion to him surpassed all praise."

It is needless further to show how well the Soudanese behave when properly commanded by those who have tact and strength of character, and who can speak Arabic. They, like children, are subject to sudden bursts of anger, and, in the mad passion of the hour—for the blood of long generations of savages and cannibals does not run in their veins for nothing—are capable of the most brutal outrage. They must be made to feel they are dominated by a strong and just

man. There is another trait which must not be ignored. In their disciplined, as in their savage, condition, they hold their arms dearer than life; to be deprived of them is an injury and disgrace never to be forgotten.

Such were the men Major Lugard, the Administrator in Uganda under the I.B.E.A., introduced into the country.

His first reason for so doing was the imperative necessity of having a reliable, drilled body of troops to protect the State from its numerous enemies, and to prevent its rival factions from flying at each other's throats. The financial condition of the company precluded the employment of Soudanese from Egypt, or the enlistment of troops from India, as has been so successfully done in Central Africa. But here were good troops close at hand, and to be had at a low rate of pay.

His second reason was, that to have this large body of irresponsible soldiery without any control, pay, or means of subsistence, except rapine and robbery, close to the borders of the country, was a continual menace to its tranquillity. Driven from Hat-el-Estiva by the advance of the Dervishes, they had established themselves in the neighbourhood of Lake Albert, and within the sphere of British influence. Armed with rifles, and possessed of abundant ammunition (the latter obtained from Stanley's abandoned camps), the lightly armed natives could offer little opposition to their tyranny and depreda-

tions. Major Lugard's means being limited, he only brought in some six hundred; but, as the numerous followers, wives, children, and slaves averaged about ten to each soldier, the task was no easy one. Choosing the best for the garrison at Kampala and other places in Uganda, he settled the remainder in a series of forts he erected on the frontiers, where their raids, which in the absence of sufficient European officers he could not hope entirely to prevent, would be directed against the Wunyoro and other hostile tribes.

Those at Kampala were disciplined and drilled into very serviceable troops by Captain Williams, with the assistance of their own leader, Selim Bey. Selim had, in the general anarchy succeeding Emin's relief by Stanley, remained true to the Egyptian Government and to Emin, and was of great assistance to Major Lugard in inducing the Soudanese soldiery to enlist with the I.B.E.A. Company.

The engagements made between Major Lugard and the Soudanese are to be noted. He agreed to obtain leave from the Khedive for their enlistment; if such leave were refused, to give them every facility to go to the coast, and compensation for the year's service in the interim. Pending the Khedive's reply they were not to be sent to the Soudan, nor beyond the north of Unyoro; they were to retain the Egyptian flag, and receive orders through Selim

Bey. Also they were to receive the same pay as when in the Egyptian service.

If, however, the Khedive's reply when received was favourable, they were to be formally enlisted by the I.B.E.A. Company, to fly its flag, and to go wherever ordered. The Khedive's reply, which came a year later, was favourable, but before its arrival the I.B.E.A. Company had ceased to govern in Uganda, and the formal enlistment, therefore, never took place.

One of Sir G. Portal's first acts was to direct Major Owen to take over into the service of Government the Soudanese, the discipline of whom in the outlying forts, where they were left uncontrolled by any European, left much to be desired. Unfortunately, as subsequent events have proved, nothing was said to these men as to the terms of service. (Blue Book, Africa, 1893, No. 4.) The troops were now organised and formed into five companies, of 125 men and native officers each, Major Owen being in command; the privates received 4 rupees a month, with one tarboosh and clothing yearly. From time to time extra companies were formed, as the exigencies of the service demanded.

In the end of May 1893, whilst Major Owen was thus busily employed in the outlying forts, Major Macdonald became acting Administrator. Being senior officer at the capital, the command

of the Rifles there also temporarily devolved on him. He had hardly taken charge when the relations between him and Selim Bey became very strained. He accused Selim Bey of complicity with the suspected intrigues of the Muslims, and believed him to be instilling sedition into the troops. Very stormy messages passed, ending in the arrest, degradation, and deportation of Selim Bey, who subsequently died on his way down to the coast. Major Macdonald, fearful of the soldiery resenting the proposed arrest of their leader, and not satisfied with the replies given by their native officers to his questions as to the oath of allegiance to be taken to the Queen, on the morning of the 18th of June assembled the whole of the Soudanese troops at Kampala, having previously introduced into the fort some European missionaries and traders, armed Swahili,* and Protestant Waganda, and with these, and a loaded maxim, confronted the Rifles assembled on parade, and desired them to lay down their arms. The command was obeyed. Major Macdonald then proceeded to Entebbi, the headquarters of the Rifles, and with the assistance of some European traders and 700 Waganda, in like manner disarmed the garrison there.

The position of Major Owen and his subordinate in the outlying forts was therefore rendered one of great danger. There was war between the Protestant and Mahommedan sections; the Soudanese under

his command, so long their own masters, and now feeling the restraints of strict discipline, not only were tempted to join their co-religionists, but were alarmed and irritated by the news of the treatment, regarded by them both as undeserved and harsh, of their comrades at the capital and Entebbi. Fortunately, Major Owen was a strong man, who commanded their respect and loyalty, and they remained faithful. Had the maxim at Kampala been fired, there can be little doubt of what would have been the fate of these officers.

It does not appear at what date the garrison of Kampala and Entebbi were given back their arms. It must have been before November 1893, for in that month they, under Major Owen, fought well against and conquered Kikukari, a formidable chief, although he was assisted by some of their former comrades who had not been enlisted by Major Lugard. In the same month Colonel Colvile arrived in Uganda, and took over the administration and command of the troops. He brought with him two Arabic-speaking officers, Captains Gibb and Thruston; these, in addition to the officers already in the country, enabled him greatly to improve the discipline of the troops.

During Colonel Colvile's administration, the Soudanese were augmented by the enlistment of some 500 who had marched from the Congo Free State, and settled themselves, with at least 10,000

followers, to the west of Lake Albert. Here, in default of other means of subsistence, they lived by, raid and robbery. Captain Thruston, then in charge of Unyoro, induced them to enter our service, and after a long and painful march round the head of the lake, sent them, with those of their followers, whom an epidemic of small-pox had spared, to headquarters in Uganda, where Major Cunningham drilled and worked them into shape.

The troops now numbered about 1,200, and during this and the following years did good service, fighting (450 strong) in the Unyoro expedition under Colonel Colvile, also under Major Owen; they served, too, under Captain Gibb and Mr Grant in several harassing expeditions, entailing not only some fighting, which they regarded as a pleasure, but long marches and little food. In Unyoro 150 of them and a few irregulars under Captain Thruston repulsed the attack on Fort Hoima made by 700 Wunyoro armed with guns, and many thousand spearmen. Half a company of them under the same officer stormed and took the almost impregnable fastness of Masaja Makuro, 1,000 feet high, under a storm of stones and bullets. Again 450, with 100 irregulars, were marched by Captain Thruston 85 miles in four days over a road almost obliterated by overgrowth and swamp, surprised by night Kabarega's capital, and drove him out of his kingdom. We have the testimony of many officers as to their conduct.

Colonel Colville says: "They have done particularly good work and cheerfully borne the hardships and privations of the campaign, and thrown in their lot with us on promise of pay and clothing, now four mouths in arrears . . . and even when they get it small enough.'

Mr Grant, who has probably had as much experience as any man, says in writing of the Umruli expedition: "The Soudanese behaved very well, and though often tired and hungry not a sound of dissatisfaction escaped their lips."

And Major Thruston reports: "The behaviour of the officers and men was all that could be wished, and the cheerful way they underwent great fatigue and some hardship is deserving of all praise."

The Soudanese have been often accused, especially by the missionaries, of hideous crimes. Of an alien race and the mercenaries of a foreign yoke, they are not likely to have been popular with the Waganda. In 1893 Mr Grant was sent to the frontier forts, where it is to be remembered the Soudanese had been left without European control, to enquire into these accusations, and reported 'in the main favourably of their conduct. In one of the forts, indeed, serious outrages had been committed, but, as the natives averred, chiefly by the degraded Lendu, the slaves of the Soudanese. A passage in a recently published letter* from a missionary, where he says that hearing a rumour that the

Soudanese garrison had run away from Fort Lubwa's he hastened to return to his station near that place, as the Usoga people would be likely to take advantage of the absence of the troops to loot it, throws a side light on these accusations, and would seem to point to their being, in some measure, at least, the result of prejudice.

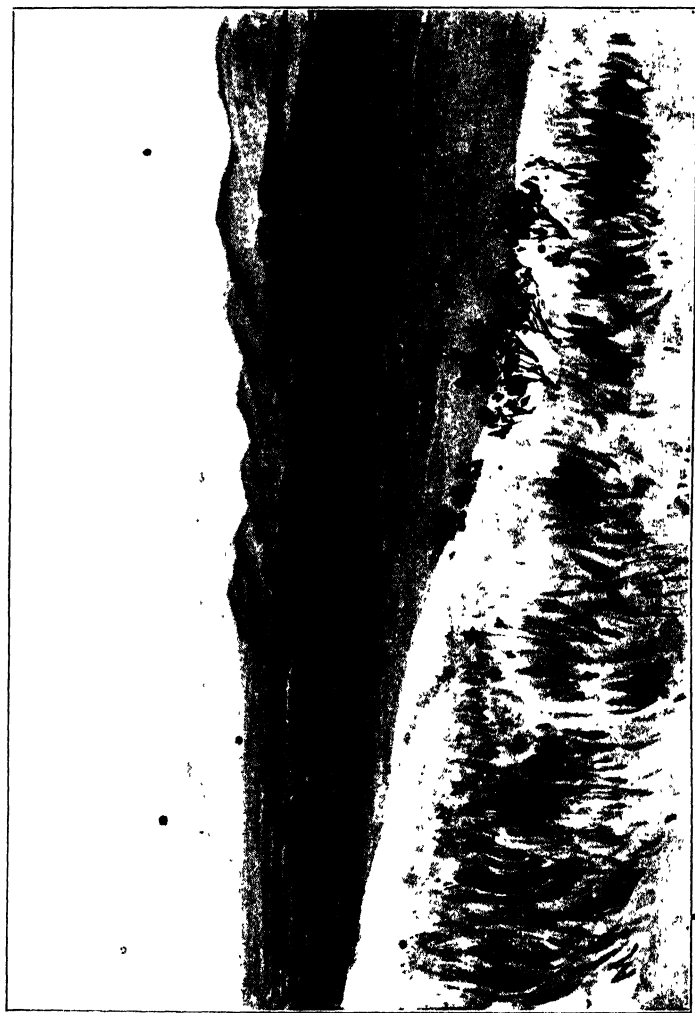
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CHAPTER II

OUTWARD BOUND

Sir Gerald Portal's Mission to Uganda—Start to join him under Colonel Colvile—An Outward Voyage—Zanzibar—A Dynastic Crisis—The New Sultan—Mombasa—The Zanzibari Porter—His Life and Death.

SIR GERALD PORTAL had gone on a mission to Uganda, and had taken with him a number of military officers. I did not know where Uganda was, or what was his mission: but, after three months' experience of quiet country life, I was beginning to tire of it, and thought I should like a change; so I did what few sensible people ever do, and what I had never done before, I read a leading article in a newspaper, and, with still greater courage, a speech by a well-known explorer. They were both very dull reading, but they gave me the information I required, and, through them, I learnt that Uganda was a country in Africa on the Victoria Nyanza, which had hitherto been visited only by explorers and missionaries, and until quite recently had been occupied by a chartered



MOUNT KILIMA NJARO FROM KINANI.

company, who, not finding the bargain a good one, was about to abandon it. Sir Gerald Portal had therefore been sent to see whether it was worth the while of the Imperial Government to take it over or not.

I then wrote to the War Office to ask that in case any more officers should be required I might be allowed to go out there.

Shortly afterwards, on a Saturday night, I received a telegram telling me that my application had been granted, and that I was to start on the following Friday to catch the Brindisi mail, and thence, *via* Aden, I was to travel to Zanzibar.

This was on 5th August 1893. The next day was a Sunday, and the following Monday a Bank Holiday, so there only remained three whole days to complete my preparations. I travelled up to London by the night mail on Monday, in a crowded excursion train; most of the passengers were drunk, and all were noisy, and I felt extremely glad that I was bound for a distant and less savage country. I set about buying my kit, and bought a great many things that I did not want, and very few that I did.

I now learnt that Sir Gerald Portal had telegraphed from Mombasa for four military officers who could talk Arabic.

Our chief was Colonel (now Sir Henry) Colville, of the Grenadier Guards, who had been selected

on account of his military rank, his well-known abilities, and his previous experience of Soudanese troops in Dongola, to succeed Sir G. Portal in the charge of the country. The others were Captain Besant, a friend and brother-officer of Captain Lugard of Uganda fame, Captain Gibb, and myself. Lugard's influence, and his own services in Egypt, had secured Besant's appointment. Gibb and I were appointed only because no one else, who was similarly qualified, was willing to go. This I learnt afterwards, but when we started we were both under the impression that we had been selected for our merits, and we were congratulating the War Office on its discernment in selecting such good men.

On the 11th August we all four met on the Calais boat. I always think that an outward journey has much more charm than a homeward one. On the latter I know all that is before me; there is the pleasure of visiting one's home, the pleasures of material comforts and occasional ones of art and of pleasant society, but against it all is the horrible tedium of a humdrum life, and of the surfeit of comfort, the rush and struggle and conventions of a hideous civilisation, and the unlovely companionship of one's fellow-men, whom knowing well it is impossible to admire, and, at times difficult not to hate. But on the outward voyage the world is before one, and all is unknown; sorrow and

sickness and death there may be, but when they come it will be time enough to grieve, and we may hope for new interests, new pleasures, and new friends, new difficulties to be met only to be surmounted and to call out new energies, and with them the joy of conquering. So I started off in the highest spirits, which, strange to say, were more or less justified by the event; the rest of the party were not so fortunate in some respects, for they had to know much pain and sickness before they saw England again.

The journey from England to Aden is nearly as well-known as that from Hyde Park Corner to Piccadilly Circus. From Aden to Zanzibar for an ordinary observer there is nothing to record except a hot sky and a rough sea, and we were all therefore delighted when, after three weeks, Zanzibar loomed grey in the morning twilight; and then with the rising sun there was seen a fairy spectacle of an enchanted island, a graceful outline of palm and mangoes, and the rosy morn behind it.

The city of Zanzibar is very much like other Oriental cities, with narrow streets, flat-roofed houses, crowded, dirty, and rather picturesque; but the island is a paradise to the eye. The land is undulating, well wooded, fertile, cultivated, and brilliantly green, covered with groves of areca and cocoa-nut palms, mango trees and cloves, all richly

coloured. But it is only the eye that is pleased; the climate is hot, damp, relaxing, and malarial, and its effects are visible in the pallid, washed-out faces of the European residents, and in their capacity for consuming alcohol in various American liquid forms of poison.

The island had just experienced a dynastic crisis. The race of Zanzibar sultans is a short-lived one. Five years have now consumed three of them. The one who had just then died, Seyyid Ali, had suffered from dropsy, and after each tapping his death had been impatiently expected by all his family, every one of whom hoped to succeed him. So, in anticipation, a successor was chosen by Mr Rennell Rodd, the Consul-General, in the person of Hamid bin Thweyu, who professed to like being protected. A signaller was stationed on the balcony of the agency, who, on hearing of the demise of the sultan, was to signal the news to the guardship, whence immediately a party of blue-jackets and marines would be sent to seize the palace, and to keep out intruders. After much delay the sultan died at last; a messenger ran to the agency, a blue-jacket heliographed the news to the ship, and in an instant a party was landed. But the scramble had already begun, and Seyyid Khalid, the son of the well-known Sultan Seyyid Burghash, was already in the palace, and two other rival aspirants were on their way to it. Khalid was 'turned out' by force, the other two were sent back, and Hamid bin

Thweyu was brought in in triumph, and the crisis was over.

The possession of the sultanate means the enjoyment of a civil list and several estates, the revenue of the whole amounting to about £30,000 a year, of much outward dignity, of a very limited judicial and of no political power whatever, and, I should think, also of a great deal of annoyance in having perpetually to receive advice from Her Majesty's Agent. In spite of all this it seems to be an office much sought after, probably in that it is a means of becoming solvent, for every Arab noble is in the power of the Indian usurers.

Mr Rodd drove us over to one of Hamid's villas to present us to His Highness.

He was a stout, good-looking man with no moustache and a bushy black beard, and, though dressed *en déshabillé*, with naked feet, a small linen cap, and a sort of dressing-gown, his appearance was dignified, and his manners, like those of all Arabs, were all that good manners should be. I think that few crowned, and otherwise unprotected heads, if similarly attired, would have shown to equal advantage: this, however, is perhaps only to be expected, if it is true kings and poets are never fit to be seen. Hamid was a fine scholar, and his Arabic was a model of Koranic purity. He was rather pleased, I think, to find a stranger who could appreciate his talents, and who did not hesitate to tell him so, and

when I came back from Uganda, he was good enough to make me a Knight of his Brilliant Star, an honour which only a few British officers share with many Goanese shop-keepers.

After a few days we sailed with our porters to Mombasa, slept a night there, and the next day were towed for 6 miles up to the head of the harbour, where we pitched our camp.

Mombasa is the seat of a very old and very squalid civilisation. According to Milton, the angel Gabriel pointed it out to Adam as a "lesser kingdom," together with its neighbours, Quilsa and Melind. At that time, I think, the Portuguese must have been holding it. They built a picturesque fort, which still remains, but they were afterwards turned out by some Arab colonists, who were again conquered by a fresh importation of their countrymen from Muscat, to which state, together with Zanzibar, it became an appanage. On the separation of Zanzibar from Muscat, Mombasa was allotted to the former. Then the I.B.E.A. Company leased it from the sultan, but on liquidation gave it up, and now, though it nominally belongs to him, it is administered directly by the British Consul-General.

The harbour was very pretty, but quite what I expected, a fjord like an arm of the sea, with wooded shores and mangrove creeks.

No account of a journey in East Africa can be held to be complete without some mention of the Zanzibar



THE PLAINS FROM THE KU' HILIN

porter. *Quot homines tot sententiae*, every traveller has given a different account of them. Professor Drummond said that as a class they are unequalled in the world for wickedness, dirtiness, ugliness, laziness, and stupidity, and that they break every commandment at least once every day. The author of the "Great Rift Valley," who appears to have been in many ways victimised by them, on the other hand is enthusiastic over their virtues, and wastes much sentiment on their sinking into an early and unhonoured grave. My own experience is that they are certainly wicked, lazy, and stupid, but not more so than many other classes, African and European. As for their appearance, I think them, on the whole, rather good-looking; and if you give them soap and clothes they are always clean. Out of a hundred probably fifteen are rascals, who will run away with their advance of pay at the first opportunity; another fifteen are impostors, who are not porters at all, and who cannot carry a load, but who will fall sick and will not try to get well again; the remaining seventy will be very decent men, not particularly honest nor truthful, but patient, strong, and enduring, who will stand a great deal of unnecessary bad treatment, and who, moreover, if well fed and justly treated, however severely, will show a considerable amount of devotion.

Some of my men had been with Mr Stanley, and, as is to be expected, that prince of African travellers

possessed the art of managing them, and they were loud in his praise, though he by no means ruled them with a velvet glove. They are very improvident, and their lavishness is very magnificent. After two years' hard work in the interior a porter will return to the coast, and will find himself in possession of perhaps 150 rupees. Very possibly he will be drunk in a brothel for ten days, and come out of it sober and penniless. It may be that he is not given to drink ; then he will go to a Goanese or Indian shop, and buy fine raiment there, and when he is informed of the price he will tell the shopman that he is an Arab, and a free man, and not a dirty Swahili slave, as he really is, and he will pay him double for his vanity's sake, will then hire a house, and a mistress to look after it, and will entertain all his friends with prodigal hospitality ; in a week he will find all his money gone, and will borrow a little from a usurer, but very shortly will accept the inevitable, cheerfully put the load on his head, and tramp out again for another two years' exile. From one of these journeys he will not return, for he will fall sick on the march ; and when the caravan starts in the morning he will be left behind in his grass hut, with a strip of dirty calico to cover him, and a few days' food, but he will never eat it, for the hyenas are gathering around, and the vultures are watching to join in the feast.

The bones of porters were milestones on the road to Uganda. He probably does not pity himself, nor

do I pity him. His life has been hard and short, but it has had some joys. Ours are often as hard and joyless, and all too long, and our departures are often more unpleasant. I do not think that he would wish to change his fate for that of the respectable English citizen who, as daily reported in the death columns of the newspapers, after a long and painful illness (probably two unsuccessful operations for cancer) borne with exemplary Christian fortitude (the poor man was in too much pain to speak), entered into his rest (he must have been very pleased to go there), mourned by a sorrowing family (his sons would not have him back again for a fortune a penny smaller than that he has left behind), in the sixty-third year of his age (he is very glad the years are over, and truly thankful that there is little prospect of a re-incarnation).

CHAPTER III

THE MARCH TO UGANDA

Horses—General Description of the Route—Detailed Description—The Wa-Kamba—Game Country—Kikuyu—The Rift Valley—Kavirondo—Its People—Black Beauty and White—The Victoria Nyanza—Travelling by Canoe—Bishop Hannington's Murderer—African Scenery—Egotism of the Obscure—Colville's Secret.

WE had in front of us a march of 820 miles. Loaded porters, when outward bound, will only travel about 12 miles a day; the journey, therefore, would take us nearly two and a half months. None of us liked the prospect of walking, so each of us provided himself with horses; their number was in proportion to our laziness. The colonel came first with four, then myself with two, while Gibb and Besant, who were big men, and heavy weights, to whom a long daily tramp was not such an *infandus dolor*, contented themselves with one a-piece. Three of Colville's, one of mine, and those of both Gibb and Besant succumbed on the road to tsetse fly, or to poisoned grass. Colville's fourth and my remaining one died in Uganda.

A detailed description of a march through a little-

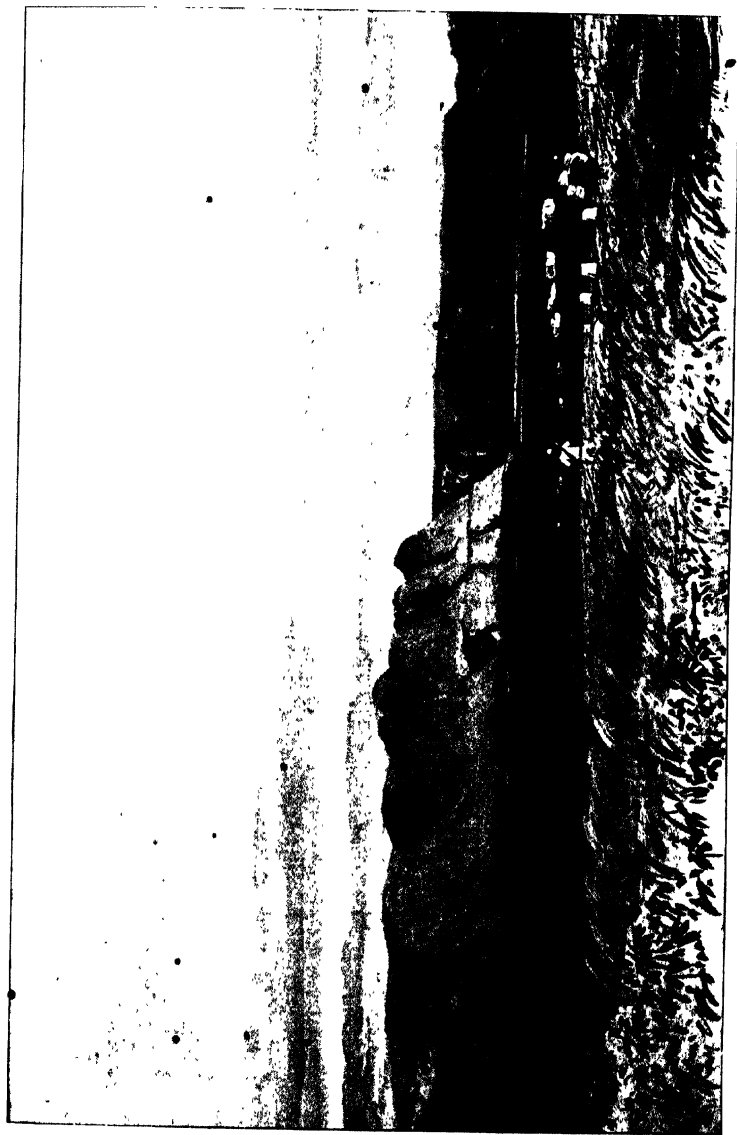
known country, where the inhabitants are few and primitive, and where, therefore, there are no historical and few human interests, can, I think, only be made interesting by a writer who is both a keen observer and a scientist. He can see what is new, and what is rare, what is worthy of notice, and what should be lightly passed over. This, I regret, I am unable to do myself, but I can refer the reader to Dr Gregory's "Great Rift Valley," and to Mr Joseph Thomson's "Masailand." Nevertheless, at the risk of being tedious, I will venture to patch together a few excerpts from my diary which will show what our daily life was like, and which perhaps may, in an inadequate manner, give some idea of the scenes through which we passed.

Briefly, our first 20 miles were across the fertile coast belt, which provided us with the ordinary African scenery, such as one sees weekly in the illustrated newspapers; then followed 200 miles of dreary, tangled, thorny scrub, where water was scarce and filthy. Then the land began to rise quickly, and the scene changed to one of open savannahs, with wooded hills and valleys, a country abounding in game, with the flora and fauna that is more associated with South Africa than with the Equator. This lasted for another 200 miles till we had reached an altitude of 6000 feet, and came to a belt of forest with magnificent timber, great junipers, cypresses, and big-leaved flowering trees. Then

we dropped into the Great Rift Valley, which has been fully described by Dr Gregory. After crossing it we climbed up to an altitude of 8000 feet; the road lay along high breezy downs, the valleys of which were covered with thick forests, and here and there were some clumps of bamboo. This lasted for over 100 miles, then by a steep descent we dropped down 4000 feet, and found ourselves in typical equatorial African scenery—a swampy land overgrown with long coarse grass, a fertile soil well cultivated in patches by a fairly numerous population of a very primitive people. This country extended down to the shores of the Nyanza.

Such is the general description of the whole route; but the following few pages will give a more exact account:—

Two days after leaving Mombasa the country became more and more arid, and the tropical coast vegetation gave place to mimosa scrub. The water was generally thick, green, and stinking, and lay in pools which were nearly dry; round them, between high and low water marks, there was always to be found a broad fringe of cattle, donkey, and goat dung, which was waiting to be washed in by the next shower; so the more there is of rain the dirtier becomes the water. We then crossed for 30 miles a waterless plain, and camped on the side of a mountain where there was a natural reservoir which happened at the time to be full, otherwise we should



THE EASTERN WALL OF THE RIFT VALLEY, WITH THE TERRACES OF LAKE SUES.

have been compelled to go on another 12 miles. The country was very sparsely inhabited, as the scanty population live only on the hills, on the tops of which there are a few patches of cultivation. Looking down from our camp there lay at our feet, as it were, a dreary sea of mimosa scrub, brown and monotonous, as far as the eye could reach, out of which rose, as island peaks, here and there a stony mountain.

We had by this time shaken down to caravan life, which, though monotonous, was not unpleasant. Every day was much the same as another, and the routine generally as follows: At half-past four in the morning the first drum is beaten, and the porters strike their tents; the traveller gets out of his bed, if he has got one (mine collapsed the first time I lay down on it, and was thrown away), and without even an apology for a wash, gets into his clothes and ties up his kit. At five o'clock the second drum is beaten, the porters strike and roll up the traveller's tents, whilst he swallows tea and milkless porridge. Such a performance at such an hour would be impossible in Europe, but in Africa there is no difficulty about it whatever.

At a quarter past five the last drum sounds, and the head of the caravan moves off, and by the half hour the camp is deserted by men, and the impatient hyenas take their place. The rate of marching is about two and a half miles an hour,

so the camping ground is reached usually between ten and eleven o'clock. There is invariably a heavy dew on the grass until about nine o'clock, so one is thoroughly soaked up to the waist. Half an hour or so after arrival is spent in pitching tents, during which time the cook boy (every servant is a boy whatever his age may be, as in India) prepares tea. This tea is followed by the day's toilette and a rest, and about one o'clock luncheon and more tea are ready. The afternoon is spent in doing nothing, till about half-past four, when the inevitable and necessary tea is again prepared, after which the party disperses—some go shooting, others for a walk, or they amuse themselves as best they can. Six o'clock in the evening is the hour for the hot bath, after which the traveller puts on his night garments, and at seven o'clock is dinner, which consists of goat and unleavened millet, "chapatties," and of course the indispensable tea. There is not much temptation to linger over the feast, and by eight o'clock he is in bed, which is always uncomfortable, and his sleep, possibly owing to its coming so soon after the consumption of the tough goat, is never dreamless.

After a week's walk through the scrub we reached the Tsavo River, a rapid stream of snow-water from Kilima Njaro. Its banks are lined with a fringe of doum palms, and other green trees, rather refreshing to the eye. Here the game country begins,

and lions, elephants, oryx, water buck, and many other species come to drink in the river. This stream is the boundary of the country of the Teita. These people are of a rich brown colour, like that of a strong cigar, graceful and slight of figure, with comparatively delicate and regular features. They wear next to no clothes, but many beads and wire ornaments. Except for their appearance they are very unattractive. Daily we met them driving flocks of goats for sale in the Mombasa market. When we asked them to sell they would neither agree nor refuse, but would pass on without a look, sullen and beast-like. But on my return I discovered a *novum organon* for the advancement of civilisation by annexing the goats I wanted. The owners came to expostulate. I gave them rather more than the Mombasa price, and they went away without a word, neither pleased or angry.

Two hundred miles from the coast brought us to Kibwezi in Ukamba, where there is a Scotch Industrial Mission. It has attempted a hopeless task; the mission is not, and never can be, a success. Free education is carried to such an extent that the two hundred children who form the classes are paid to go to school.

The Wa-Kamba are an attractive race, cheerful and atheistic pagans, who try to enjoy life, and who succeed in doing so, but they will have nothing to say to the Gospel, which they consider a very

improbable story. They wear no clothes except a short goatskin hung over their shoulders; but the youths of the country are resplendent in beads, and brass and iron ornaments, and their bodies are painted a bright red with grease and ochre. The girls are similarly unattired, and when quite young are pretty. The married women, however, are given to walking about in a condition in which white ladies usually stay at home. Their standard of morality is high, and compares very favourably with that of the coast towns; but in these parts the less there is of clothing the more there is of morality, and perhaps the same applies all the world over, to manners as well as morals.

Kibwezi is 3000 feet above the sea. The supply of water was better, the country less desolate, and the vegetation less monotonous. The temperature was about 95° Fahr. at noon, but the air was dry and bracing. We had now passed the wilderness, and had reached a district where game of all sorts abounded, and we saw large herds of zebras and hartbeestes. After reaching an elevation of 4000 feet we found ourselves in a hilly country with deep valleys; it was well timbered and comparatively thickly populated, and the brooks were of running water.

In another ten days we had reached the plains of the Athi River, which are a broad sandy savannah extending as far as the eye can reach. These

plains now form a sight probably unrivalled in the whole world. Looking around us for the distance of 100 yards, and stretching away to the horizon, we saw, scattered in vast profusion, many species of antelope, large and small. Hartbeestes, various kinds of buck, herds of zebras and of gnus, frequent rhinoceroses and ostriches, traces of elephants, lions, and leopards, and occasionally lions themselves sleeping on a rocky mound, or stalking through the grass. Not long since buffalo and eland abounded, but when we passed they were very scarce, since a terrible epidemic had swept away most of them, as well as the cattle of the population.

One day, looking ahead, the country for miles was swarming with gnu, the grass was cropped short; there must literally have been tens of thousands of them. As we came up a portion of the herd stampeded with a thundering noise, charged past us quite close in a column of about fifty abreast. To give some idea of their numbers, that portion of the herd took over half an hour to pass.

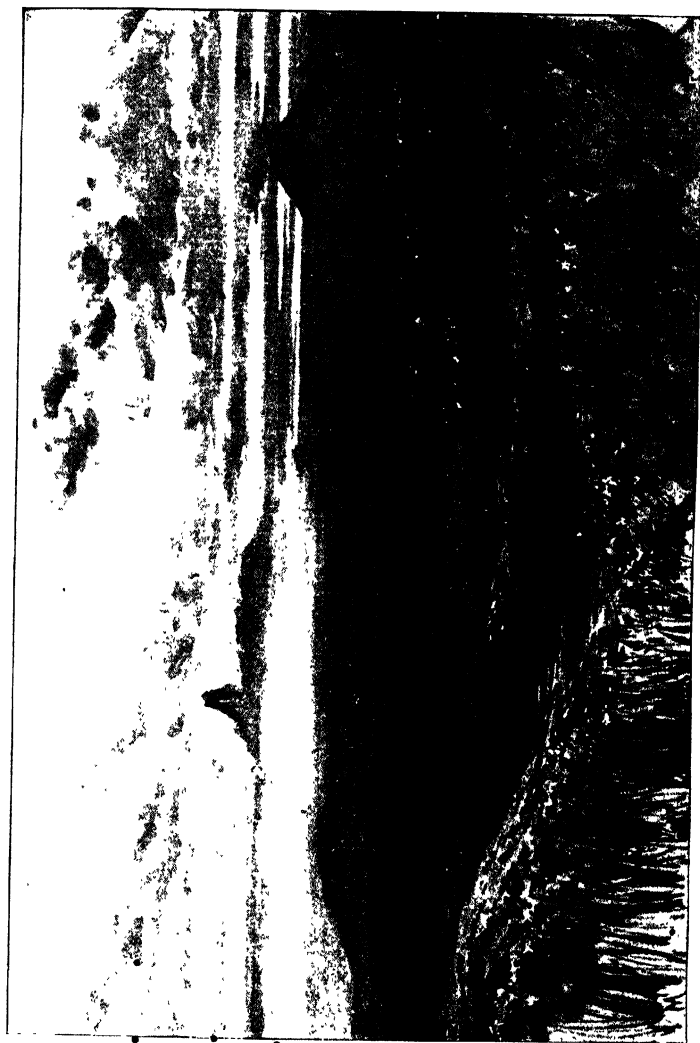
We marched for three days across the plains, and then came to the edge of a tall dark green forest. This was Kikuyu, and the next day we reached the Chartered Company's fort. The road lay through the forest, which, however, had been much cut down, and was therefore disappointing. The fort is at an altitude of 4000 feet, and from it there is a fine view, looking over hill and dale, forest

and clearing, with the Kenia mountain range in the background.

The Wa-Kikuyu are similar in appearance to the Wa-Kamba in their ornaments and absence of clothes. They are a warlike race, and were successful in frustrating the Company's first attempt at establishing a station. Ammunition had run short, and the beleaguered garrison had to retire; but shortly it returned again, and the present fort was built. This partial success was a strong tonic to the spirits of the Wa-Kikuyu, and when we arrived the garrison was in a state of semi-siege. On the march through this district the caravan had to keep well closed up, as any stragglers would probably soon have found a spear in their backs.

On leaving the Kikuyu forest plateau we dropped 1000 feet into the "Meridional Rift." This is a very large volcanic valley, about 600 miles long, and 30 wide, in which there is a series of lakes. The soil, though poor, is covered with grass and scrub, and game was consequently abundant. Our journey lay along this valley for six days.

Three days after leaving Kikuyu we came to Lake Naivasha. This lake is a fine sheet of water about 12 miles long and 6 broad, and is bounded on the west by a lofty range of mountains. Two days more brought us to Elmenteita, a small but very beautiful lake, a little trough in the mountains.



MOUNT KENIA FROM KAPTE PLAINS.

The next day we reached Lake Nakuro, which is about half the size of Naivasha : its waters appear black, and around it are black, treeless downs, and the whole scene possessed what Gil Blas' gaoler would have called a *douce melancolique*.

We then left the valley, and began to ascend the Mau, or western plateau. The sides of the escarpment were covered in part with very dense, tangled forest, but the glades, brooks, bracken, and briars were very pleasing. We were soon 9000 feet above the sea level, and the country became one of rolling downs, with occasional patches of forest and of bamboo. The sun was hot, but the wind was biting, and the cold at night intense; and though I slept in my clothes, greatcoat, and two blankets in a snug tent, I never felt warm. The poor naked, ill-fed porters suffered terribly. Hail storms frequently occur at this elevation, and if a caravan is caught in one before the porters get under shelter, some of them are sure to die. A missionary caravan once lost eleven in this manner.

About this time I first made the acquaintance of that "friendly beast," the *pediculus vestimenti*. The tribe had probably migrated from my servant's clothing to my own, and I found that they interrupted my rest at night considerably.

Twenty-two days after leaving Kikuyu we descended into Kavirondo, and found ourselves again in a land of food and people. The country which

we had just traversed had recently been occupied by many clans of nomadic and lawless Masai, a war-like and pastoral people, and owners of large herds of cattle, donkeys, and goats; an epidemic had killed nearly all their cattle, and more than half the people had consequently died of starvation; others had migrated to the south, and small-pox had nearly finished off the rest. The few who remained, having no cattle, and being too lazy to cultivate for themselves, lived by exploiting the cultivation of their neighbours. We did not meet a single member of the tribe, but on my way back I saw six, and on my third journey through their country I came across several kraals.

Kavirondo is a rolling country with swampy hollows and a fertile soil which sustains a comparatively numerous population. In former times the population may have been really large, for the few patches of grand forest which still remain are probably the remnants of one which covered the whole country, and which has been burnt down to make room for cultivation; now firewood is so scarce that it has to be bought, and it is very dear when compared with the price of grain.

The Wa-Kavirondo were the most primitive race we had met. They were absolutely innocent of any clothing or ornaments; not a rag, string, bracelet, or bead was to be seen; old men and young, matrons and maids, they walked about in the state in which

they were born. This was rather pleasing, for they are physically a very fine race, and both men and women are tall and well proportioned, except for their development behind, which is enormous. The women are so well made that from a back view they are scarcely distinguishable from the men. They all have, or pretend to have, a great curiosity as to the nature of the white man, and they appeared rather hurt at our refusal to constitute ourselves into a show. I believe that some former travellers have condescended to pull off their boots to show that they really have toes, to let the black man hear the ticking of their watches, to light cigarettes with a burning glass, and in other ignominious ways to demonstrate their own supernatural superiority. But though it is humiliating I believe it is true, that the indigenous African correlates a white skin with leprosy, or some other loathsome skin disease, and, so far from regarding us with admiration, they do so with fear and disgust. Indeed, the generic term in Africa for a white man is not *homo sapiens* but *Mzungo*, which, according to my dictionary, means (1) a wonderful and terrible thing, (2) a man who wears European clothing. There is probably not much difference between the two, and from an æsthetic point of view the black man is right, and a white skin a misfortune.

Youth is always beautiful to those who are no longer young. As Plato says : " Every one is always in some

way or other attracted and excited by the charms of all who are in their bloom. You will praise a young person with a turned-up nose as having a winning look; the hooked nose of another you consider king-like; while the third, whose nose is between the two extremes, has a beautifully proportioned face. The dark, you say, have a manly look; the fair are the children of the gods; and who do you suppose coined the phrase 'olive pale' but a lover who could palliate and put up with paleness when he found it in the cheek of youth."

This shows us that, in matter of beauty, one cannot judge by the youth of a race. It is the adults who must be the criterion. There can be few sights more hideous than that of the men bathing on a Sunday morning in the Serpentine; and if the matrons were there also, similarly unattired, they would not render the sight less ugly. But every tourist on the Nile admires the dark Apollos as they strain at the *Shadoof*; no English lady in India shudders at her naked gardener, and a bronze statue is to most people more ornamental than a marble one. As a matter of fact we do recognise our own ugliness, though perhaps unconsciously, and we do attempt to conceal, and by the nature of our garments to divert attention from it. From this attempt can be traced the origin of the sartorial art, of the invention of liveries, robes, and uniforms, and the princely fortunes of Bond Street tailors. Those of the

milliners are to be attributed to quite another motive, for few women, I think, are conscious of being repulsive. •

At last, after two months, we reached the long expected Victoria Nyanza. The first sight of it, however, was rather disappointing. I had hoped that after breasting the last bank we should come upon a scene of grandeur—a large expanse of the sea stretching away till it was lost in the misty horizon—but instead of that we saw a narrow gulf with a number of islands at its mouth, and these masked the open sea. The shores were well-wooded low hills, the lie of the land was pretty, and the vegetation of the usual tropical character. At first this vegetation pleases by reason of its novelty and immense luxuriance, but after a while it begins to pall, owing partly to the monotony of its colouring. In England the woods in summer are of many and varied greens; but in Africa they are all different shades of one colour, and that a dark and dull one.

Here our land journey of 700 miles ended, and the remaining 120 was to be made by water. The canoes came round in the morning; they were made of wooden boards stitched together, and were propelled by twenty paddles, the men sitting two abreast. When they like, which is seldom, they can go at the rate of 6 miles an hour. The crew were Wasoga, the inhabitants of Usoga, the country which borders the north-east corner of the lake. They were ex-

tremely repulsive in appearance and smell, profuse also in perspiration, but songful and merry. I was sandwiched in between two of them, one was a leper, and the other was troubled with my old friends, the *pediculi*. Islands shut out the view of the open sea the whole way, but they and the gulfs and bays, though wanting in anything approaching to grandeur, possessed a certain beauty.

After three days we came to the outlet of the Nile, at the village of the chief, Lubwa, who had been Mwanga's agent in the murder of Bishop Hannington. We were shown the spot, which is close to our station. It is an open glade leading down to the lake. The Bishop was led from his hut, and then saw the porters of his caravan stripped naked, and kneeling down with their hands tied behind them. Then his escort took off his clothes, and he knelt down and was speared to death. After witnessing this his followers shared the same fate, except one, who, left for dead, crept away in the dark and recovered to tell the tale. The Bishop was buried where he was martyred; but after a while his bones were supposed to have a malign influence, so they were dug up and removed elsewhere. They were afterwards recovered by Bishop Tucker in, I think, 1892, and were taken away by him, and buried in the Christian cemetery at Kampala. Mwanga, the true murderer, and a hypocritical rogue, was one of the mourners, and he appeared to be much overcome. Lubwa, the actual murderer, is a very

estimable old man, and he made me the present of some coffee.

Three more days brought us to Kampala, the capital of Uganda, and the residence of the King Mwanga, and our journey had come to an end.

In this chapter I have endeavoured to avoid such misleading terms as, "fine pasture," "park-like glades," "scenes of great beauty," "an ideal situation," and others which I have frequently met with in books of travel which deal with tropical Africa. Any one who goes seriously in search of the beautiful can find it anywhere, even in Notting Hill; but if by beautiful scenery we mean that which we have been accustomed to call such in Europe, then there is very little of it in the country through which we passed. If by "fine pastures" we mean Northamptonshire meadows, and by "park-like glades" anything that would recall Windsor Forest, we must not go to Equatorial Africa to find them. Ordinary grass there is at least 8 feet high, fine pasture would be about 6 feet, tall grass about 18. An elephant is more at home in those park-like glades than a rabbit would be, and it is impossible to take a walk off a path across country anywhere in Uganda or Unyoro.

To be able even to have an occasional glimpse of the country, except from a clearing near the top of a hill, a man should have been created 12 feet high. From a distance the forests certainly look like any other woodland; but try to take a walk

in one, and you will find no turf or fern, no carpets of primroses and hyacinths, but a great tangled mass of hanging creepers and spider webs ; an undergrowth of rank long grass, and weeds and thistles, and with them all a sickly smell of decay and rot.

Nevertheless, the country has a beauty of its own, and it can be judged by no other standard. There is a charm in the stillness of the scene, a beauty in the harmonious monotony of its colouring, and a grandeur in the hills and valleys, wild and desolate as they have ever been, still unchanged by man. The indescribable sublimity of the mountains of clouds is often appalling ; one can but gaze and wonder ; and, just before the sun sets, the scene is often one of fairy beauty, the land painted with gold and purple, and the sky gorgeous almost beyond conception.

Perhaps it is this being alone with Nature that causes that egotism and distorted sense of proportion which are noticeable in African residents, and which are sometimes shown in most unjustifiable forms. Most of the localities on the Victoria Nyanza are known by native names of their own, and, as every word in Bantu languages ends in a vowel, they are euphonious and not difficult to pronounce ; but if we look at the map we see among them many ill-sounding English names. It is, I think, allowable to celebrate any great discovery in a new country by the name of the discoverer's sovereign or of a

member of the royal family, and no one can take exception to the names of Lakes Victoria and Albert, or of Rudolph and Stephanie. Perhaps, also, it is pardonable if a distinguished explorer, having endured great toil and hardships, names, or allows a place to be named, after himself, as in the case in Speke Gulf, Grant Bay, and Stanley Falls; but obscure individuals who follow in their steps in the ordinary course of their business or profession, in comparative comfort and safety, have no claim to earn immortality so cheaply. A wondering posterity will want to know the origin of the names of Macdonald, Pringle, and Arthur bays, of Lake Villiers, of Tom, Dick, and Harry's falls, and many others. Captain Lugard, and our chief, Sir Henry Colvile, whose works have been more lasting, and more worthy of record than any of the numerous sponsors of ports, bays, falls, and forts, were above this vanity, and their names are unrecorded in the map of Africa; also are those of the eminent explorers, Count Teleki, Joseph Thomson, and F. J. J. Jackson.

Four of us had left the coast, but only three of us reached Uganda, for Besant almost immediately began to suffer from fever, and grew worse and worse, and the Colonel was compelled to leave him behind at Kibwezi, whence, after a long and dangerous illness, he returned to England. The Colonel himself was in a great hurry, as he had instructions

to push on as fast as possible. But loaded porters will not travel quickly, so he left us at Lake Nakuro, and, with his servants and a few porters with light loads, he hurried on, and travelling about 25 miles a day, reached Uganda about a fortnight before Gibb and myself.

On our arrival he had in store for us a pleasant surprise, which he had kept carefully boxed up during the journey ; but as it has since become a matter of African history, there is no necessity for me to be equally reticent.

PART III

CHAPTER IV

THE UNYORO EXPEDITION : OR, "*CHASSE AUX NÈGRES*"

Foreign Exploring Parties—Kabarega, King of Unyoro—War declared—The March to the Frontier—Crossing the Kafu—Mapala occupied—Kabarega retreats—Attempt to surprise him—The Albert Nyanza—Kibiro—March to Magungo—Affair at Katullaj—Loss of Purkiss—Return to Kibiro—Purkiss reappears—Owen goes to Wadelai—Returns—Establishment of Fort Hoima—End of the Expedition—Its Results.

A TREATY had been made with Germany which defined the limits of our sphere of influence and hers. No such treaty, however, had been made with the French Republic or the Congo Free State, and these powers naturally did not recognise our treaty with Germany as binding on themselves. They both claimed the right to occupy any territory in Africa they might please.

* Some purists may object to the title of this chapter, but as a missionary once said to me : "*On ne fait pas la guerre en Afrique, ce qui s'y fait c'est la chasse aux Nègres.*" Honesty has convinced me that the good Father's definition accurately describes my "warlike" operations, and honesty has made it the title of this chapter.

A. B. T.
125

provided that no other power had already established an effective occupation.

It was known that there was more than one exploring expedition moving towards the Nile from the west; notably that of Captain Von Kirkhoven, on behalf of the Congo Free State, and of Colonel Monteil, on behalf of France. How far these expeditions had gone, and what amount of success they had achieved was then unknown, and Colonel Colvile was instructed to try and collect information. The Colonel, being a practical man, decided that the best manner of finding anything out was to go and see for himself.

Between Uganda and the Nile, however, lies a native state called Unyoro, which at this time was governed by a reputedly strong ruler called Kabárega, who had hitherto successfully prevented any permanent intrusion by foreigners. Speke had passed through the country, and afterwards Baker also, as a private individual on his way to discover the Albert Nyanza. When Governor of the Egyptian Equatorial Provinces Baker returned, and attempted to annex the country, but was driven out by Kabarega, and obliged to content himself with establishing a post on the frontier. Later, General Gordon established two other posts on the Victoria Nile, but very shortly after withdrew them. During Emin Pasha's government Kabarega was induced to tolerate Captain Casati, as a sort of

diplomatic agent, for some time, but Kabarega grew tired of him, and turned him out. Emin himself, Doctor Junker, and I think General Gordon, and possibly Dr Schweinfurth had at one time or another also travelled through the country.* Kabarega had also earned a well-deserved reputation for treachery; there was therefore little chance of his allowing a large armed party to pass through his country without opposition, and a very great chance of his killing a small or unarmed one.

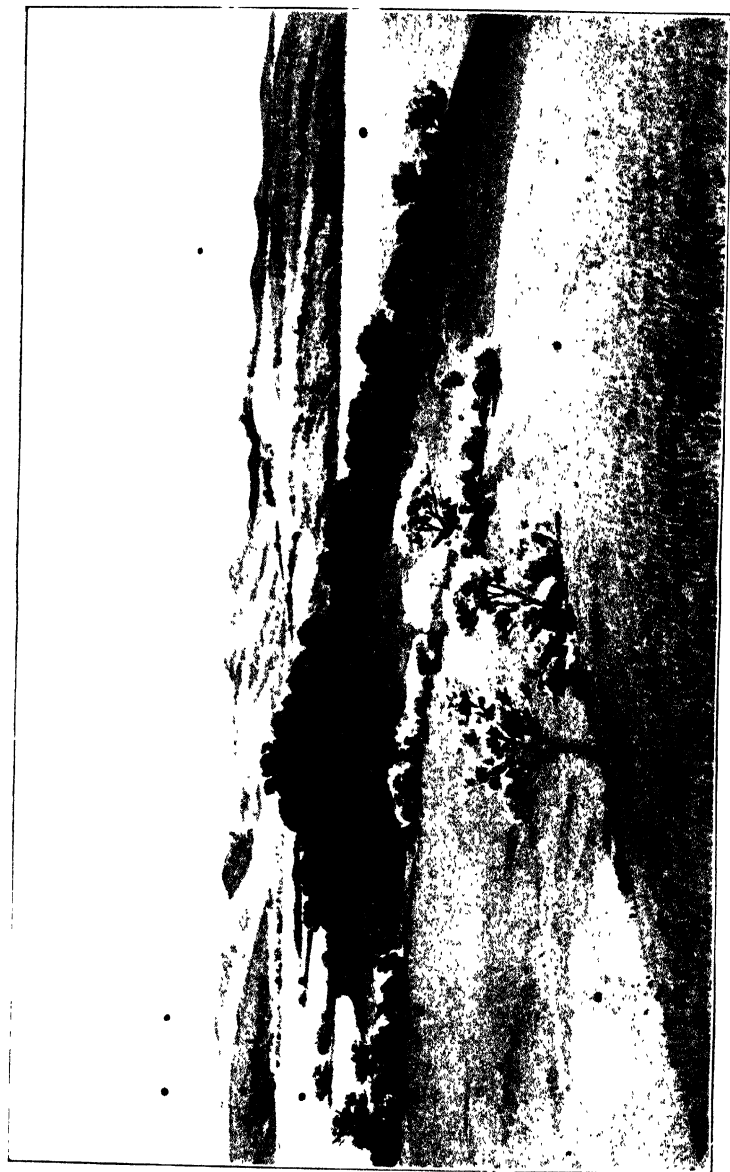
But fortune came to our aid. Pending the approval of the treaty signed by Sir G. Portal with Mwanga, Uganda was under British protection. Kabarega, fearing to meet the same fate as Mwanga, had imprudently attacked our posts, had cut off a party of our soldiers, had raided Uganda in several places, and had killed people who were bringing provisions to us. So a perfectly just and very convenient *casus belli* was ready to hand, and Colonel Colvile decided to invade Unyoro, bring Kabarega to terms, and at the same time to send a small party in a boat down the Nile to try and collect information as to the presence of any explorers.

There were two difficulties in his way: in the first place,* he had only 600 soldiers (these were a

* Writing in Unyoro, and having no books, I am unable to verify my references, and I may hence be guilty of many historical inaccuracies.

portion of the Egyptian garrison of the Equatorial Provinces, lately handed over by Emin Pasha, and brought into Uganda by Captain Lugard). A certain number of soldiers had to be left behind to preserve order in Uganda, which further reduced the number available. In the second place, the state of affairs in Uganda was unsettled. The Mahommedan section of the population had about three months before revolted, and had been suppressed, and now the Roman Catholic and Protestant sections, having no Mussulmen to fight, were showing symptoms of wishing to fight each other. Like the patriots of the French Revolution, after the guillotine had had a day's rest, they had begun to *s'ennuyer*, and were sniffing for blood.

The Colonel decided that the best way to prevent any disturbances occurring behind his back was to take care that there was no one left to create them. This plan had the additional advantage of gratifying the warlike inclinations of the Waganda. He therefore instructed Mwanga to order the whole of the available male population to mobilise, and become the army of invasion. Mwanga, who was equally afraid of disturbances which might deprive him of his throne, was delighted to comply. His subjects, too, were well pleased, for invasions of Unyoro had always been a periodic and agreeable method of giving themselves a holiday, with the opportunity of collecting a certain amount of pro-



ENTEBBI, UGANDA. 8TH DECEMBER 1893.

perty, and of replenishing their harems and slave establishments. In fact, these invasions were almost as popular as a civil war! Besides, as there is nothing a Waganda likes so well as burning somebody else's house and destroying his plantation, they were an innocent means of indulging these destructive propensities.

The Uganda state is organised on a feudal system, and its working proved admirable. War was declared on the 4th of December; on Christmas Day between 15,000 and 20,000 men joined us at the frontier. Gibb and I had reached Kampala on the 10th of November 1893, and we found there besides the Colonel, Major Roderick Owen, Captain Macdonald, R.E., Lieutenant Arthur of the Rifle Brigade, and Lieutenant Villiers of the Blues.

Owen and Villiers were sent off at once to have a preliminary canter against one of Kabarega's chiefs who had been raiding the frontier near Owen's fort. Macdonald had given up the charge of Uganda to the Colonel, and he now assumed the rank of major and the duties of staff officer. Gibb was to be left behind in Kampala in charge of the administration. Arthur and I were sent off to Entebbi, a place on the lake, about 20 miles off, where most of the soldiers were quartered. Our task was to drill, equip, and try to get them into some kind of order before the expedition began. . . .

Three weeks were busily spent in preparations,

and then we made a start. Our force was 629 all told, including porters. The roads were vile; every one had to walk in single file; our column, over two miles long, had an imposing though false appearance of being both numerous and strong. As a matter of fact its length was a source of great weakness, and an active enemy could have given us a great deal of trouble. There was no necessity to trouble our heads about the commissariat, usually one of the most difficult of a general's tasks, for our march lay through a fertile country, and we camped every night at some village, and enjoyed the hospitality of the inhabitants. We hoped later on similarly to enjoy the hospitality of the Wunyoro, though our hosts would probably not wait to receive us.

A march through Uganda is extremely monotonous, the path is about 10 inches wide, bordered by tall elephant grass, which makes an arch overhead; it leads up a steep hill in a straight line, and down it again, and then up another, and so on, and at the bottom of each hill there is probably a black oozy papyrus swamp. The Waganda have not yet learnt that a straight line is not always the shortest distance between two points. Excluding the minor swamps, and those which had been bridged, we crossed, the first day, three considerable ones, and four daily on both the second and third days, one of which was three-quarters of a mile broad. We then reached Singo, the western province of Uganda, where

Captain Portal had built a fort. Here we met Major Owen and a contingent of Soudanese, Major Owen then taking over from me the command of the Soudanese regiment, and Arthur and I becoming his wing officers. Our duties were chiefly to take command, alternately, of the advance and rear guards. I do not know which of these duties we preferred. If in charge of the advance guard, one arrived in camp about two hours earlier than when in charge of the rear, but one had to lay out the camp for the expedition, post sentries, and then wait about in the sun till the tents were pitched; while, though the rear guard man's march was long and tedious, the road had been broadened for him by those in front, and on arrival in camp he found his tent pitched and his day's work over. But the man who had the worst time was Mr Purkiss, an ex-officer of the I.B.E.A. Company, who having formerly been an officer in the merchant service was given charge of the steel boat. This was in eleven heavy and broad sections, consequently his progress through the long grass was at about the rate of a mile an hour, and he seldom reached camp before sunset.

Seven marches brought us to the Unyoro frontier on Christmas Day. Captain Macdonald, although a Scotchman, behaved like a good John Bull, and produced a tinned plum-pudding. The Colonel and I each contributed a bottle of port, and Owen killed a cow, which was about to die naturally, so we dined

in proper English fashion. But the gaiety was not excessive; the Colonel had fever, we were all rather tired, and as we had to march at two o'clock the next morning, the party broke up early.

The next day we were well in Unyoro, and met the whole of the Waganda army, who were in camp and waiting for us. They numbered from 15,000 to 20,000 men, and their camp consisted of about 5000 beehive-shaped grass huts. The country was devastated for miles around, banana plantations cut down, sweet potato gardens torn up, and houses burnt. The stench of the camp was vile, and the state of filth indescribable. We tried to find a tolerably clean spot of ground for our camp, but without success; so a party was told off for the unsavoury task of cleaning one, and we then encamped. He would have been a bold man who ventured out of the cleared space, so we were all close prisoners.

The Waganda can never do anything without talking it over for at least a whole day, so we were compelled to stay in this disgusting spot for another twenty-four hours. At last the morning of our deliverance arrived, and we started; but before we had been on the march for five minutes we had to halt, or we should have been swamped by a flood of humanity. We had forgotten to reckon with the Waganda. On they came, screaming, pushing, beating drums, blowing horns, tumbling over one another and over us; but at length they passed. Some evils,

fortunately, have a corresponding good, and in this case they widened the footpath into a tolerably broad high road. After this we always allowed them to start first, and had they only been punctual, or had all of them started at the same time, they would not have been much of an inconvenience.

We marched on for four days through a country similar to Uganda, but flatter, with a smaller population, and larger tracts of forest, and rather more numerous swamps, until we reached the Kafu river. This is a large and sluggish stream, overgrown with papyrus, which traverses nearly the whole of Unyoro, and joins the Victoria Nile at Umruli. Its breadth varies from a quarter to three-quarters of a mile, and it is ordinarily about 6 feet deep. We had expected the Wunyoro to retreat before us to behind this river, and there to make a stand, as Kabarega's residence at this date was only about 20 miles beyond it.

The ford at which we arrived was not a good one; the river being 1000 yards wide, the opposite bank could not be commanded by fire from our side: the Colonel therefore sent me off to reconnoitre. About half a mile brought me to the ford, there was no appearance of a river at all. In front of us was a long, narrow green plain, covered with reeds, and across it ran a lane of water. This plain, however, was the Kafu river, and the reeds were papyrus, the cause of every pernicious, evil-smelling swamp in the country. We walked calmly into the water for about

five yards, and then found ourselves up to our necks in water, and our feet sinking into the black ooze. The so-called ford was not a ford at all, but a ferry ! We then began to walk across the papyrus. To do so is a slow but not very difficult business, though it requires a certain amount of activity ; one has to jump from one plant to another, and as one alights to kick down the stalks to the root ; this gives one a footing, and the water comes but little over one's feet. To make a false step is to get a thorough and unpleasant ducking in a mixture of black mud and water. It is also quite possible to be drowned, as were afterwards some of the Waganda, who, having missed their footing, fell into a hole, and were prevented by the mass of decayed weeds from rising again. On that occasion Macdonald very courageously, but unsuccessfully, dived after them.

We had started at half-past four in the afternoon ; by a little after six it was quite dark, and we had not got quite half way. The mosquitoes had begun their savage torture on our legs and faces ; it was cold, dark, and a regular fever trap. Had the Wunyoro been on the other side we should have seen the glow of their camp fires ; but all was dark, so there was no use in persisting, and, had I done so, probably some one would have been drowned in the dark. Accordingly we began to retreat, but did not get into camp till about eight o'clock. On my return I tumbled into a hot bath, and during the operation

made my report to the Colonel. He had heard that there were two more crossings, each about six miles distant, one up and one down the river. Accordingly, Owen and I the next morning were sent out to report on them. They were found to be similar to the one where we were camped, and undefended, so the Colonel decided to cross where we were.

We all now, without exception, began to suffer from most violent colds in the head. Dr Moffat attributed it to breathing in the smoky atmosphere caused by the wood smoke of thousands of camp fires. He was probably right, for when the Waganda left us, and camped at a distance, the epidemic ceased.

It was decided to bridge the swamp, so in the morning Arthur was sent over with one company to hold the other side in case of attack. It took him about three hours to cross. The Waganda were told off to construct the bridge, or rather causeway, and it involved a large amount of labour. A path about 10 yards wide was first cut through the papyrus, the reeds being laid down lengthways; resting and half floating on these was laid a roadway of loppings and branches, and on these again a pavement of either banana stems, papyrus, or grass. For a small body of men this sort of causeway affords a dry passage, but the weight of such an enormous crowd as our army caused it to sink a foot or two below the water. A bridge of this description will last for some months unless washed away by a flood.

Our next two marches lay through a very fertile, picturesque, and hilly country, with broad valleys, in which were the pleasant plantations of the Wunyoro, smiling with banana groves, patches of sweet potatoes, Indian corn and sesame. Their owners had fled, and we could see a number of them on the hill tops watching us passing by. Early on the third morning, on breasting a low hill, we saw before us the ruins of a large town of grass huts, all black and smouldering. This was all that was left of Mapala, the capital of Unyoro, and the residence of Kabarega. He had himself burnt it down, in accordance with the custom of most Africans when attacked by superior numbers; as by a pleasing fiction they deceive themselves that their so doing is a voluntary action, and that their enemies have had nothing to do with the matter. We passed straight through the place, as there were no attractions to induce us to stay, and we had also heard that there had recently been an epidemic of small-pox. We camped among some plantations three miles further on.

This was 2nd January 1894. Some of the Waganda who were sent out to forage and devastate the country fell victims to the ambuscades of the Wunyoro. Kabarega had made off eastwards to the wild Budonga forest, and we leisurely pursued him. On the second day his rear guard was found drawn up to oppose us. Macdonald, who was in charge of our advance guard, drove them off without difficulty;

their loss, however, was slight, and we had only one man wounded. Kabarega's camp was now only six miles off, but it was in a forest. Owen went out at sunset, and, climbing a hill, saw their fires burning.

We all now had come to the conclusion that the fighting powers of the Wunyoro had been greatly overstated. At the Kafu they might have opposed us with some chance of success; but Kabarega had let the opportunity slip by: he had deserted his home without striking a blow, and now obstinately, but very wisely, refused to give battle. It must be remembered, however, on his behalf, that our force was overwhelming, and his previous experience of war with the Waganda had taught him the wisdom of running away, the Waganda never having stayed in the country for more than a month. It is true they used to do a great deal of damage, but the soil is so fertile that in a few months it was naturally repaired, and a grass house can be rebuilt in a few days.

However, it would not do to rely on Kabarega's Fabian tactics, so the next day we advanced in battle formation. This was an advance in three columns, which made their way across country at deploying interval, the Wunyoro continuing to retire before us. After a long and trying march in point of time, but a short one as regards distance, we halted in the afternoon on the top of a hill. Below us we saw Kabarega's camp only 2000 yards away,

and swarming with Wunyoro, but alas! between us and them lay a belt of almost impenetrable forest. It was rather difficult to know what to do. To break Kabarega's power and bring him to terms it was imperative to inflict on him a crushing defeat. The Colonel's wish was to force him to fight, or, if that were impossible, to give him an opportunity of attacking us. To fire on the Wunyoro with our maxim gun would be useless, for the first volley, though it might kill a few, would disperse the rest in the forest under whose cover they could quietly continue their retreat. So it was very rightly decided to do nothing that day in the hope that Kabarega might attribute our inactivity to fear, and consequently be emboldened to offer battle.

The next morning broke with a mist covering the valley, and the camp could not be seen. I was therefore despatched with 50 soldiers and 50 Waganda to reconnoitre. If any one could make their way through a forest, the Waganda ought to be able to do so, it being quite their own element. I therefore sent them on in front, that they might make a sort of way for us to follow in their footsteps. But even thus, it took us two hours and a half to traverse the 2000 yards to the camp, which, when we reached it, was deserted. In its midst was an elaborate and extensive miniature town of grass huts, the ground was cleared and swept, and the whole surrounded by a grass wall. This was

Kabarega's travelling palace; it appeared to be the result of much labour, but I was informed that it was constructed in about half an hour by a thousand workers, and that a similar one was erected every day while his Majesty was travelling. I set fire to the camp as a signal to the Colonel that our fox was not at home.

The Colonel now decided to give up the chase, for we were, as he reported in his despatches, entering a difficult bush country, the scanty supplies of which would certainly be exhausted by the Wunyoro army. Kabarega would evidently not wait to meet us—at any rate, not until our force was weakened by hunger. It was therefore decided to make a feint of attempting the capture of his cattle and ivory; both of which he valued far more than the lives of his followers. To carry this out we retired 10 miles until we struck the track followed by his cattle, in the hope that this movement would draw him out of the forest, and indeed it had the effect anticipated, for on the 10th January we learned that he had left the bush country, and was returning to his capital.

Now was an opportunity to surprise him and cut off his retreat. Owen, Arthur, Villiers, and I were ordered to start in the early morning to do so; we were to travel light, no tents, no baggage, forced marches, and no fires to be lighted. Off we started, but a Waganda chief, who, fancying his taste in

strategy, having conceived the same brilliant idea, had, without our knowing it, started a few hours before us. It afterwards appeared that he came into touch with the Wunyoro, who, thinking he was the advance guard of our whole force, retreated again into the forest.

Meanwhile, we marched from five in the morning till seven in the evening, but wasted time in sending small parties up distant hills to look around, whilst the whole of the rest of our force waited for their return, and by stopping to question any persons we met, who, as was to be expected, told us nothing but lies.

The next morning we entered Kabarega's camp, but he had left it at midnight. It is not probable, but it is possible, that if we had pressed right on, waiting for nothing, we might have overtaken the over-zealous Waganda and joined our forces with them. The whole art of savage warfare is summed up in Napoleon's maxim : " Make up your mind where to strike, and then strike quickly." We did not strike quickly enough. It now became evident that it was useless to pursue Kabarega any longer. The Waganda would not stay in Unyoro more than a couple of months, and were already beginning to desert in large numbers. We had not been yet to the Albert Nyanza, nor sent any reconnaissance to the Nile, and if ever this was to be done now was the time.

Unyoro is of the shape of an hour-glass; the narrow waist is only about 60 miles across; the south end touches the Uganda frontier, and the north end the centre of the east shore of Albert Nyanza.* Along this slip we were to build a line of forts, each at a day's march distance from the other. The effect of these would be to blockade Kabarega, and confine him to the northern half of his kingdom, and finally, by perpetual hammering at him, to drive him across the Victoria Nile.

On 17th January we reached Kitanwe, a cultivated district on the edge of the trough in which lies the Albert Nyanza. On the 18th we set out for Kibiro. We had all looked forward with excitement to our first view of the Albert Nyanza. On we marched for three or four miles over downs covered with scrub and spear grass; but we could not see the lake.* Then we came to a cairn of stones, and each soldier, in accordance with the local superstition, bent down, took up a stone, and threw it on to the cairn. This was a *lapidetum* to the genius of the lake. A few yards further found us on the edge of an almost precipitous bank, about 1000 feet high, and immediately beneath our feet lay, calm and shimmering, a huge sheet of water. A thick haze hung over it, obscuring the view on every side, and for all that we could see, the lake was boundless.

* Since the late wholesale transference of parts of Unyoro to the Waganda (1898), this description is no longer applicable.

It must have been on a day like this that Sir Samuel and Lady Baker first saw it. They had undergone great perils and great hardships, and the magnificence of their discovery had strained their nerves to the highest pitch. They described it as illimitable, and so it appeared to us ; but it is really only about 90 miles long and some 30 broad, and for the most part of the year the blue mountains opposite and the cascades falling over them are clearly visible.

The ordinary conception of a lake under the equator is of a sheet of water with swampy shores, infested by myriads of mosquitoes, surrounded by dense tropical forest, with rank undergrowth and a tangled mass of creepers. Such would be a fairly correct description of Lake Victoria. Lake Albert is very different, and has a character of its own. Its eastern shore is bounded by a steep and sometimes precipitous bank from 1000 to 1500 feet in height, the edge of the water being fringed by a plain varying from a few feet to a mile in breadth, which is covered with fine grass and thorny bushes, and abounds in game. The general character of the vegetation is more that of the highlands above Suakin than that of the equator, and it is therefore a very welcome change. The western shore is formed by a chain of lofty mountains, the highest peaks of which must be at least 8000 feet above the level of the lake. The sides of these mountains are like walls rising out of the water. The forest is dense. The rainfall in the

highlands is great, and at almost every mile there is a little torrent falling into the lake. The whole scene is intensely green, and when viewed from a boat at about a mile from the shore resembles a fjord in Norway.

Kibiro, the place we had now reached, is the only manufacturing town in Unyoro, and consists of about a thousand grass huts closely huddled together. It is the great salt field of the country. At the bottom of a straight and narrow ravine there bubbles out of the sandy soil a spring of almost boiling water. This water is sulphurous; being extremely nauseous to the taste, it is highly, and I believe justly, prized for its medicinal virtue. To extract the salt the stream is dammed up into many little pools; after a few days these are allowed to run off, and leave a deposit of brine. This is collected and placed in a large porous earthenware jar. Underneath this jar is another into which the brine filters, and is then collected and boiled down, and the result is the desired salt. The salt has a very large sale in Uganda and Unyoro. The baths of Helowan, near Cairo, are from a similar spring, and there is another little-known one at Akasha, on the second cataract.

The Colonel and main force were to stay at Kibiro, the Waganda had been left behind near Mapala; Owen and I were to march with two hundred soldiers to Wadelaï, and Pufkiss was to accompany us in the steel boat, in order to ferry us across the Nile at

Magungo, the site of General Gordon's old Egyptian fort. It was expected that we should find some of the remnants of Emin's troops at Wadelai, in which case we were to enlist a sufficient number of them to form a garrison there.

We started on the 20th January, and in three days reached the confluence of the Victoria Nile and Lake Albert, at a point called Katulla. Here, while resting for a few minutes, we discovered a huge fish, about the size of a porpoise, lying dead inside a basket fish-trap. This was considered a great find, and was dragged out to be cut up. The effect of a long residence in the tropics is to acquire a habit of saying disagreeable things, and of becoming in general a wet blanket, so I at once remarked that I was surprised that good Muslims should disobey the injunctions of their own prophet by eating anything that had died naturally, quoting a text from the Koran to support my statement. An acrimonious discussion ensued. It was gravely argued that a "dead thing" (the original Arabic is a feminine noun) could not possibly include a fish. But, bang, whizz, whizz, bang, bang, bang! the hair-splitting theologians were immediately silenced. Slugs were flying around, and a crowd of Wunyoro surrounding us. We had been ignominiously surprised, and all on account of a fish! We rallied at once, returned their fire, and stopped their rush. In a few minutes we had driven them off, and were pressing after them as fast as our

legs would carry us. But again there came a whizz, this time that of bullets and not of slugs; two men suddenly dropped their arms, and their rifles fell to the ground. We at once turned about to meet the new attack, and then we saw that our navy had come into action! Purkiss was handling his boat under sail in a manner that would have done credit to the captain of a three-decker, and had favoured us with a broadside. He had come round a corner, and, seeing an action going on, had mistaken us for the Wunyoro, and let fly at us; but he soon saw his error and stopped firing, and no further casualties occurred. The fight was now over, so we returned to our fish, and cut it up without further discussion.

Owen and I marched on for a few miles, Purkiss sailing off in his boat to find the passage through the sudd, and we were to meet the next day at Magungo. The march along the Victoria Nile was rather pleasant, the grass was young and fine, and the path lay through an acacia forest. We passed many villages belonging to fishermen, and on the slopes behind the river saw several others surrounded by bananas and cultivation. The old fort at Magungo is about nine miles up the river. Nothing now remains except the ditch, and the interior was a mass of thorns and weeds.

We pitched our camp on a clear space outside, and waited for Purkiss. By the evening of the second day, as he had not arrived, we began to be anxious.

On the day we had left him a violent storm had arisen, so we feared the boat had foundered. On the third day Owen went down to the lake, and, wading through the sudd to the open water, fired a volley in the hope of attracting the attention of Purkiss, but all in vain.

I had been left in charge of the camp, when, just after sunset, it being quite dark, a heavy fire was opened very suddenly upon us from all sides. To return the fire in the dark would be to waste ammunition, so we allowed it to go on; but, after about half-an-hour the firing ceased, and the Wunyoro went away.

I then went round our lines thoughtlessly carrying a lantern. This, of course, was a target, and it was very soon knocked out of my hands by a bullet, after which I continued my rounds in perfect safety. Immediately afterwards Owen returned and reported his want of success.

We now decided to wait no longer for Purkiss, but to make a raft, and to try to cross the river on it. The only wood which we considered available was that of the acacia trees. We made and launched a raft, and I and ten swimmers started on a trial trip. The wood was heavy; without a load the raft was under water, and when we got on it it sank with us up to our necks, and we had to swim ashore. We then killed some goats, inflated their skins, and tied them under the raft; but even then, when loaded, it sank up

to our waists, and was unmanageable. The river was 1000 yards wide, our force, with followers, over three hundred men, and on the opposite bank were a crowd of savages who were making hostile demonstrations. To cross under these circumstances was impossible, so Owen very reluctantly decided to return to Kibiro. If we had but known, we might have made a raft of the Ambatch, a tree which grows in the sudd, having its roots in the water, and whose specific gravity is less than that of water.

Two days brought us back to Katulla. There were no signs of Purkiss, so we regretfully gave him up as lost; but to our surprise, when one day's march from Kibiro, we saw the boat sailing away to the south; we were, of course, much relieved. Owen very sensibly said that we should the next day know the reasons of his failure, so there was no good in speculating about them. When we arrived at Kibiro, we learnt that Purkiss had carefully sailed along the mouth of the Victoria Nile, but, finding it blocked the whole way with sudd, had returned to Katulla; seeing no signs of us there, he had hoped that we might have made our own way across, and had therefore sailed down the Nile to where the path from Magungo strikes the river. Here he was at first well received by the natives, and prepared to wait for us, but on the second day they made a treacherous attack on him. He therefore, with his small force, was unable to stay longer, and returned to Kibiro.

The Colonel was thus compelled to abandon the idea of sending a force to Wadelai, and decided to send the boat only with Owen, Purkiss, ten soldiers, and the Swahili crew to find out any news, and, if possible, to induce any soldiers who might be there to enlist in our service. They rested for one day and then sailed away. Within a few miles of Wadelai they were fired upon, but after parleying with the natives were allowed to pass. On reaching Wadelai Owen made a treaty with the chief, and enlisted some of his men, who were in the possession of fire-arms, to form an irregular garrison. He presented the chief with a Union Jack and a large present, and in return the chief gave him, I think knowingly, a lot of false information. The boat stayed one whole day at Wadelai, then the chief informed them that the Dervishes from Lado had heard of their arrival, that a large force was only three hours distant, and was coming to destroy them. Whether the news were true or false, it would obviously have been folly to have remained.

Owen had accomplished his mission with great success, and though he personally regarded the prospect of captivity at Khartoum as that of an interesting experience, and was therefore tempted to wait, he very properly decided that it was his duty to return at once. After ten days' cruise he was back at Kibiro; he found that we had gone, leaving, however, a fort and a garrison both there

and at Kitanwe, and that we were now at Hoima, half-way between the lake and the Kafu, where we were engaged in constructing a station which was to be the headquarters of the Unyoro garrisons.

Meanwhile the Waganda had not been idle. They had been left behind, near Mapala, and had formed an orderly standing camp. Churches were built, services performed by an English chaplain,* out-of-door meetings were held nightly, presided over by Waganda clergymen, and tub-thumping went on as merrily as in Hyde Park on a Sunday afternoon. But religion was not allowed altogether to take the place of the serious business of cattle-lifting. The Waganda general was suspected of having embraced Christianity more from his admiration of the social system, education, material comfort and artistic costume, which appear inseparable from it, than from any inward conviction of its Divine truths. He was therefore not the man to allow the crusade to be one of words only. He would smite the Amalekites; and in this resolve he had the active sympathy of his Muslim fellow-countrymen. His army marched out on the 28th January, and not being hampered by our Soudanese, who, in mobility cannot be compared with the Waganda, made many and rapid marches; in three days it had reached Kabarega's camp and surprised it.

* Mr Pilkington, afterwards killed before Lubwa's. He was a layman.

A pitched battle ensued, Kabarega was nearly captured, and had to run for his life, his army was defeated and dispersed, and the Waganda remained masters of the field, of some thousands of goats and of a large herd of cattle.

Our headquarters had reached Hoima on the 9th February, and had immediately set to work to construct a fort. The site chosen was an ideal one; it was in a flat, cultivated plain in the fork between two running streams. At a distance of about a mile and a half there was a range of high hills, from which the ground sloped away gradually to the Albert Nyanza, about 20 miles distant, and a fine view was obtained of the mountains on the other side of the lake. This was to be my home for the next year, for the Colonel and the headquarters were to return to Uganda immediately, Owen and Villiers were to go to Toro, the country bordering on Lake Albert Edward, recently discovered by Mr Stanley, Macdonald was to go to England, and I to be left in command of Unyoro, with Dr Moffat and Mr Forster, who were to join me from Uganda.

After ten days the Colonel left Hoima for the Kafu, where the fourth and last fort was to be built. During the night after he left I received a message from him to say that Kabarega's army had re-assembled, and were marching on the Waganda camp, and that I was to go at once to reinforce them.

I arrived there by sunrise, and found the Waganda army starting to meet their enemy. In the evening they returned in driblets, with long faces and crest-fallen; at ten o'clock their general came to my tent, and told me that they had met Kabarega's army, and that the whole of the Waganda army had turned and ran. He was very angry, and demanded the blood of some of his chiefs. I told him it did not much matter, that such incidents in war were not uncommon, and that I would go with them the next day, and we would see what could be done. At sunrise I started off with all the Waganda army, a noisy, shouting crowd, of about 10,000 men; we marched till late in the afternoon, when we heard that Kabarega was off again. There was no use to attempt pursuit, for we might have played hide-and-seek with him for a month. So the next day we marched back again, and the Waganda army was allowed to disperse to their homes. I went on to see the Colonel at the Kafu, and to receive my last instructions from him.

Small-pox had broken out with great virulence among the Waganda, and the scene on the road was both hideous and pitiful, the path being strewn with miserable white objects, masses of corruption, with swarms of flies, buzzing round them. These were Waganda sufferers, deserted by their comrades, and hobbling on to a certain and repulsive death.

On 27th February the Colonel crossed the frontier, and re-entered Uganda; I arrived at my new headquarters at Hoima, and the expedition had come to an end. From a fighting point of view it had been trivial, but its results were not inconsiderable. The power of Kabarega had been broken, the Uganda frontier secured from invasion, a road had been opened out to Lake Albert, British influence had been extended down the Nile as far as Wadelai, and we had discovered that our claims were in no danger from our European competitors. Lastly, it afterwards was shown that these two months' campaign in which the Uganda Protestants, Roman Catholics, and Muslims had been engaged together under discipline, and with a common object, had proved to them that they were one nation, had softened their asperities, and had had the effect of removing for ever any danger of a religious civil war.*

* Unfortunately this prognostic was not completely fulfilled, but in the late rebellions religious fanaticism has not been the principal factor as before this expedition it had been.

CHAPTER V

THE OCCUPATION OF UNYORO.

Building the Fort at Hoima—The Affair at Kisabagwe—Rabadongo's Adventure—Search for the Troops of the Congo Free State—Finding them—Their Complacency—Their Story—Down the Nile to Ayara's Village—Signing Treaties—Patrol to Masindi—A Love Tragedy—After the Belgians again—Difficulties—A Platonic Argument—Success—The Exodus—Deaths—At Magungo—Fear—Back to Hoima—The Capture of Masaja Makuro.

MY force consisted of about six hundred regular and sixty irregular soldiers ; with these I was to guard the road between Uganda and the Lake, to repel any attacks, and, if the Wunyoro assembled anywhere within striking distance, I was to disperse them. This force, though it appeared small, was quite sufficient for the purpose, for experience taught me that two hundred well-armed soldiers, when kept well together, and acting vigorously on the offensive, are more than strong enough to defeat any number of undisciplined savages, armed only with muzzle loaders. Indeed, the introduction of these arms into Africa has rendered its conquest an easy matter, as they are, in the hands of the natives, far often less dangerous weapons than the poisoned arrows and

spears which they have in a large measure superseded.

My first care was to complete the fort ; this was a square stockade with sides 100 yards long, and at two of the opposite corners were small square bastions which flanked all four sides. The stockade could therefore be well defended by twenty men. My next step was to build houses for the troops ; these were built in streets which faced the stockade, and which, therefore, were enfiladed by its fire. Then came the important question of agriculture, the tending of the existing banana plantations, the planting of sweet potatoes, and the sowing of Indian corn. The soil and climate rendered this a most encouraging task, for two crops a year could be obtained, as there were two rainy seasons. The first rains begin in March, and last for three months, the harvest being gathered in June ; they begin again in August, and this time they are much heavier and rather longer, and last till the middle of December ; then follow two and a half months of absolutely dry weather, the country is parched up, and there is an opportunity of burning the long grass.

After a year we had over 400 acres under cultivation round the fort, had built a high bridge on piles over the stream, had completed a neat, grass-built town, had laid out gardens, introduced irrigation and the cultivation of rice, and had collected a colony of Waganda Muslims and of Wunyoro refugees who



FORT HOLMA. HEADQUARTERS DURING 1894.

settled around us. In fact, Hoima had become a little centre of civilisation, which, as I flattered myself, showed the rest of the negro world an admirable pattern of a well-ordered community and clean farming.

I am afraid that I preferred these peaceful duties to the more exciting one of *chasse aux nègres*. It is usually difficult to wring from an Englishman the confession that he is not a sportsman, but I am bold enough to own that I never possessed the skill or the taste for killing. It is true that I have shot zebra and hartbeeste for food for my men, and guinea-fowls and other birds for my own, but I have done so merely for convenience sake, and not for pleasure : similarly now I had to take to shooting the Wunyoro, and it was not long before the sport began.

It was necessary to send out every day foraging parties to collect food, and the Wunyoro had begun to beleaguer us, and to lay ambushes for any one who might stray from the main body. In this way I lost several men. All the plantations near the fort were deserted by the Wunyoro, so the ambushes must have been detached from some collected party. I soon received information that Rabadongo, the katakiro or prime minister of Kabarega, was a few miles off, near the site of the former Waganda camp, so I took a company of soldiers with me and started off to explore. We met a few peasants on the road, who, without exception, absolutely refused to give any

information. My patience was worn out, so at last I had recourse to Roman methods, and had one of them bastinadoed. He howled and shrieked and swore by all he thought sacred that he knew nothing, that he hated Kabarega, and that he only wished he knew something that he could tell us, for he would do so gladly. So I let him go, and reproaching myself for my incredulity and want of humanity, proceeded on my way. Not two minutes later we fell into an ambuscade! Rabadongo and his people were drawn up in a line parallel to the road at about ten yards' distance in the long grass. They were quite invisible, and had let the advance guard of four men pass, and then let fly at me as I rode by on my donkey. They as usual fired straight up into the air and hurt nobody. My donkey had been the property of the late Colonel Selim Bey, of Wadelai, and was an old warrior. The Colonel had scaled eighteen stone, I about eight, so there was nothing to weigh on my charger's spirits. He knew his duty well and did it. With a loud bray he broke into a canter, charged straight into the ambuscade, and was soon in the middle of them, and I was indulging in fine play with my revolver. My men were close behind me, and the Wunyoro turned and fled, but their start had been too short, and at every yard a man fell. They soon distanced us, and rallied, but only to be dispersed again. I had got off my donkey, and was out of breath. The soldiers went on, and I ran after them as fast as I could to

stop the shooting, as they were firing very wildly, and wasting their ammunition.

By the time I overtook them they were on one side of a steep and deep ravine and the Wunyoro climbing up the opposite bank, so we gave them a parting volley and let them go. About a minute afterwards a stout man, wearing a robe of coney skins, started like a hare from its form, from behind some bushes close in front of us, and darted after the running Wunyoro. My Wunyoro irregulars shrieked out "Rabadongo!" and started in pursuit like a pack of hounds. The chase was long and interesting; for a man of his habits Rabadongo showed a remarkable turn of speed; on he pressed, running straight up the hill. They were only a few yards behind him; he doubled and found a path; they followed, and then we could see no more. (These Wunyoro irregulars of mine were followers of a chief called Amara, who, having been exiled by Kabarega's father, had taken refuge with Emin at Wadelai, and subsequently had entered our service at the same time as the Soudanese.) Amara and his men returned shortly afterwards greatly disappointed, saying they had lost Rabadongo. I consoled outwardly, but inwardly I was rather pleased. We now turned back and found the Wunyoro camp within a stone's throw of where I had beaten the peasant. The camp consisted of about fifty grass huts, so the force must have been about 150 men.

After this we were left unmolested for about a week, when I heard that two other and smaller parties had assembled; these, however, on our going out to drive them away, dispersed without offering any resistance.

Shortly afterwards, Dr Moffat, while returning from the Kafu river with the caravan, bringing cloth from Uganda for the payment of the troops, was attacked by a large number of the enemy. After a good fight, in which some of his men were wounded, he drove them off with considerable loss. This party had been detached from a force that was mobilised on a steep little mountain, situated a few miles off the Uganda road, called Masaja Makuro. This mountain is a natural stronghold; it had always been a refuge for the Wunyoro during the Waganda invasions, and until I afterwards captured it our caravans continued to suffer a considerable amount of interference.

In the meantime we had been busy with our station. For patient hard work, when he is compelled to it, no one beats the Soudanese soldier. He worked from six in the morning to noon, then from one o'clock till sunset, and did it all for four rupees' worth of calico a month. This rate of pay had been fixed by Captain Lugard, and as for eight years, while under Emin Pasha, he had received nothing at all, he was not inclined to grumble.

I had been at Hoima about three weeks when

a Wunyoro boy came to me from Kibiro to say that he and some others, while paddling across the Lake, had met a disabled canoe, and rescued the occupants, who stated that they were running away from a large force of black soldiers having many flags, which had appeared on the western shore, and were devastating the country. I at once jumped to the conclusion that these must be Owen's Dervishes, who had come down the Nile, and accordingly set off the next day for Kibiro, and embarked in the steel boat which I had christened the *Alexandra*. The guide was very stupid, and he really knew next to nothing about the lake, but as I knew even less, I was obliged to follow his directions, and accordingly set sail and steered for the other side. At daybreak we found ourselves near the western shore, at about a mile's distance from a little harbour and some huts. Apparently the inhabitants were not early risers, for it was not until we were within a few yards of the landing place that some one, hearing the plashing of our oars, came out of a hut and saw us. Then in a moment the alarm was given, the people came rushing out of their houses, driving their goats, who always sleep with the family, before them. The bank behind the houses was exceedingly steep, however, so the goats refusing to be hustled were left behind, and fell into our hands as hostages. A parley then ensued. They wanted to know why we

had come there? and why, having a country of our own, we would not leave theirs alone? If these questions had been asked me in Uganda or Unyoro, it would have been difficult to have given a satisfactory answer; but here there was a plausible excuse at hand. I told them that I had heard that some bad people had come to rob them, and that out of pure goodwill to them I had come to see if it were true, and, if necessary, to protect them. They replied that we were liars, that no strangers had been near the place, and that we had better be off. The parley continued. I told them I intended to rest there, and if they did not behave themselves I would kill all their goats. We then stole a chicken or two, had breakfast, and at noon continued our journey towards the south.

Everywhere the inhabitants ran away on seeing us, so it was impossible to get any information until, after two days, we reached the place where Stanley and Emin Pasha had stayed. Here a white man was not such a thing of horror, and after a little while we succeeded in inducing the natives to come and talk. They told us that no stranger had been anywhere near the south end of the lake, and that there was no use in going any further in that direction. So we turned our boat's head about, and set sail for the north. That night we slept at our first landing place. Our old friends had seen us coming, and had very wisely cleared out with all their property.

The next day we continued our journey northwards. Just before sunset a terrific storm arose, and in a few minutes a heavy sea was running, and the waves breaking over our boat. Within half a mile, and under our lee was a rocky shore. We tried to row out, but the wind and sea grew stronger, rain was falling in torrents, and the lightning, attracted by the steel, was dancing around the boat. The crew were soon in the throes of sea sickness, and cared not whether they lived or died. One by one they fell down exhausted, and, careless of blows and curses, refused to row. I then hoisted the small mizzen sail and lay to. But we were gradually drifting towards the shore, the storm showed no signs of abating, and the darkness was pitchy. Our boat was nearly full of water, which the captain and another man were baling out with my hat and teapot, while the remainder of the crew were lying inert and helpless at the bottom of the boat.

On we drifted towards the rocks, now only a few yards off. By the flashes of lightning I could see a crowd of savages waiting for us, and occasionally an ill-aimed arrow whizzed past our heads. The situation was very uncomfortable, and I solemnly prepared to find myself in a few minutes on a cruise on the Styx. We were now only 30 yards from the shore, so I dropped the anchor overboard. The cable ran out for some length, and I began to fear

the water was too deep. But the rattle stopped, and then we paid it out to its full length, and luckily the anchor did not drag. I then let fly with my shot gun at the Lurs, who promptly retreated to their houses.

At length the storm blew over, and the sea soon went down. Tired, wet, cold, miserable, and not excessively glad to be still alive, we fell asleep. At daybreak we rowed a little way on to a small bay where we landed. The Lurs came down in their war-paint to meet us. After a good deal of talk, two of them laid aside their bows and spears and bravely entered the lion's den. They were rewarded with a small present of glass beads, and the ice being thus broken we fraternised. They told me that a number of black men, having with them a quantity of baggage, many flags, a cannon, and one white man, had arrived at Mahaji Saghir, about a day's march to the north. They also said that they believed that this strange force had been driven from Mahaji by their brave countrymen, and that having taken us for its remnants they had come down to polish us off. We had now at last some definite news, and from the mention of a white man I inferred that we were about to meet Lieutenant Baert, who, since the death of Captain Kirkhoven, had become the commander of the Congo Free State's eastern exploring party.

By mid-day we were dry, warm, and fed, and, as

a south breeze sprang up, set sail. The breeze soon freshened into half a gale; we flew through the water, skirting the magnificent coast, and having a very pleasant sail. At about five o'clock the lake had visibly narrowed, and we could easily see the eastern shore, and shortly afterwards a long low promontory, reaching out about a mile into the lake, lay before us. There we saw a crowd of huts, and a swarm of black figures running about amongst them in great excitement. Soon flags appeared being carried to the water's edge, and frantically waved. Then we heard the beating of drums, and the bray of a bugle reached us as it struggled faintly up against the wind. The shore was lined with a mass of people running about and waving their rifles. The absence of order did not indicate to my mind the presence of troops of a civilised nation, and I began to fear that the white man was an Arab, and the force that of the Dervishes, whose reported advance had compelled Owen to retire from Wadelai.

Soon the ominous name of "Dervishes" was whispered among the men, whose faces lengthened visibly. The prospect of captivity at Khartoum had no attraction for them, nor had it for me, so I sheered off the land, and, passing the promontory, ran under its lee, and then turned round and rowed towards the shore. At 500 yards off I should be able to see who they were, and if they proved to be Dervishes I could

turn on the maxim gun for a while, to give them a taste of civilisation, and then fly away before the wind. On we rowed, though slowly, having the gale against us, and I went forward and prepared the gun for action. The Zanzibari crew murmured that they were all dead men, but still they continued stolidly to row. Those on shore had crossed the promontory, and were drawn up to meet us. The Dervishes have a passion for flags, so what made me most anxious was the number of these. I could see about twenty, red, white, blue, parti-coloured, plain, and some speckled, as if with writing on them. I then pressed the button of the maxim, and sent a few shots over their heads. They did not reply, which settled the question of the Dervishes. Soon we saw the red flag with the star and crescent, the bugle sounded loud and plain down the wind, and I recognised the Khedivial salute. We were now close to the shore, the troops fell into battle order, and I heard the commander shouting out Turkish words of command.

I landed, and was greeted with a royal salute, lowered flags, a flourish of bugles, and a rattle of drums; then four mild, elderly black gentlemen, neatly dressed in white cloth, came to meet me. Many compliments followed, and I was led to an iron garden-chair, where, entertained with coffee, I held a levee, at which all the officers were presented to me. It was now nearly dark, so I told

them that, as they would probably like to perform their evening prayers, I hoped that they would not allow my presence to interfere with their religious exercises, and that they could now retire; as for business, if intercourse between friends could properly be called by such a name, I would meet them in the morning, and no doubt we could arrange everything in a way that would be a pleasure to both of us. The next morning they all came down to my tent and told me their story.

When Emin Pasha left Wadelai his troops divided into two parties, one of which, under Selim Bey, went to live near Kavalli's, in the district to the south-west of Lake Albert; and the other, under Fadl-ul-Mula, were distributed in the fertile lands to the east of Wadelai.

Captain Lugard had enlisted Selim Bey's party, and Captain von Kirkhoven that of Fadl-ul-Mula, taking them off with him to the west of the Nile. Von Kirkhoven, who was described to me as a good commander, and a man of ability, was accidentally shot dead by his servant, and was succeeded by M. de Laages, who, if I remember rightly, died soon after, when the command devolved on Lieutenant Baert. This officer had, a short time back, received instructions to establish a military post at Wadelai, and had despatched the whole of his Soudanese troops to do so. They numbered 700 rifles, and started in two divisions at a fortnight's interval. The first was

under Fadl-ul-Mula, and consisted of two companies, or 300 men. They fell in with a Dervish army under Arabi Dafalleh; a battle ensued; the Soudanese were defeated and almost entirely exterminated, the few who remained alive being taken prisoners. Fadl-ul-Mula was killed. This worthy man had apparently been maligned by the English and Egyptian Military Intelligence* Department, who had been informed, and had believed, that he and his followers had joined the Dervishes after the departure of Emin Pasha. The second two companies had reached Wadelai in safety, and it was they who had been reported to Major Owen as being a force of Dervishes who were about to capture him. Finding the supplies insufficient to feed them, they migrated down towards the Lake, and the party I was with was one-half of this force, while the other half was camping in the mountains at a few days' march distance.

Fadl-ul-Mula had been entrusted with a letter to Colonel Colville, but it had been lost in the fight. After hearing all this I told them that Captain Baert must have been acting under a misapprehension, for the country that they were in was English; and that I could not allow any force, flying a foreign flag, to remain in our dominions, and that, as far as I could see, the simplest way would be for them to enlist with us. They replied they would gladly do so, for they had engaged with the Belgians, and received pay from them for one year only, which had now

expired. So I handed them a Union Jack. The troops at once fell in by order of their commander, and the Union Jack was received with a Royal salute. I was then invited to come up to their camp. On my way there I was followed by the soldiers, who appeared to be hugely delighted, wasting some thousands of rounds of ammunition by firing into the air to testify their joy, after the manner of Buffalo Bill.

The camp, which was a collection of more than a thousand huts, was crowded with a mixed throng of men, women, and children from almost every race in the Soudan. These were slaves; and it was explained to me that, on passing through any new district, they invariably helped themselves to as many as they wanted. The commander had 150, and the other officers and men were supplied in proportion; there were also large herds of cattle and goats, and fowls innumerable. All these, too, had been gathered at the expense of the subjects of the Congo Free State; the place had, consequently, the appearance of a pastoral encampment of some filthy nomad tribe, rather than that of an orderly military station.

In spite of their failings or vices, which were those of race and custom and not of the individual, the commander and his colleagues were very amiable and good-hearted old men. They inquired with great tenderness after Sir Samuel Baker, and were sincerely

glad to hear that he was alive and well. "He was just and strong, and a brave commander," they continued to repeat, and they spoke also with affection of Lady Baker. They were eager to hear news from Egypt, and I gave them the first news they had had of the death of the Khedive Tewfik Pasha.

About Emin Pasha contradictory opinions were expressed, but on the whole they were unfavourable. This was probably to excuse themselves before me for rebelling against him. One officer said that Emin was a good *hākīm* but no *hākīm*—that is to say, a doctor but not a ruler, and this appeared to be the general opinion. A minority, however, quoted an Arabic proverb, which may be roughly translated into English as "as mild a mannered man as ever cut a throat or scuttled ship."

After more coffee and conversation I told them that I would ask for further instructions from Colonel Colvile, and on receiving these would come back to them—that that would probably be in a month's time—and in the meantime they should send for the other company to join them where they were. I was then conducted to the boat; just as I was embarking, the Lur chief of the district ran down, and implored me to rid him of this gang of thieves, who had eaten him out of hearth and home. This old man became a great friend of mine, and showed an unusual gratitude by afterwards rendering me some slight services.

I have forgotten to say that the mystery of the presence of a white man was cleared away as soon as I saw among the officers a very fair Egyptian. He was the clerk who had stirred up the sedition against Emin Pasha, and was a man of great parts, who, though he enjoyed an evil reputation, I subsequently found very useful. He had with him a charming little daughter about six years old, the mother was dead, and she followed her father everywhere, and the affection he showed for her made a bright spot amidst the squalor and misery of the camp.

We then set sail northwards, as I wished to go to the village above Wadelai, where Purkiss had been attacked by the Lurs, to see what their temper was now, and if possible to recover the rifle that had been stolen from him. After a few miles we reached the north end of the Lake whence the White Nile, now joined by the Victoria Nile, flows out as one great river. The outlet is in the form of an inverted estuary, and is about a mile broad as far as Ayara's village, the place whither we were going; there it narrows suddenly to a breadth of 300 yards, but almost immediately widens again to half a mile, which then remains the average breadth till the Dufle cataracts. The shores are fringed the whole way with a band of "sudd," or floating vegetation, and one can therefore only land at places where passages called "mishra" have been cut through it.

We reached Ayara's in the evening, where the people, seeing us coming, all ran away. The next morning we continued our journey for about a mile, and again landed at a village. After much shouting and making of peaceful demonstrations we induced a few of the villagers to meet us, and I sent a message to Ayara to come and meet me. He replied that the man who had stolen the rifle had run away. This of course was not true, but I was tired of living in the boat, and of being alternately drenched and scorched by the rain and sun, so we turned our boat's head down stream, and made our way back to Kibiro, and thence to Hoima.

I had been away ten days, and found on my return that Moffat had been hard at work on the fort, which was now completed.

I had been instructed by Colonel Colville to make a treaty with Kavalli by which he should place himself under British protection; in fact, I had a bundle of printed treaties which I was to make as many people sign as possible. This signing is an amiable farce, which is supposed to impose upon foreign governments, and to be the equivalent of an occupation. The *modus operandi* is somewhat as follows: A ragged untidy European, who in any civilised country would be in danger of being taken up by the police as a vagrant, lands at a native village, the people run away; he shouts

out after them to come back, holding out before them a shilling's worth of beads. Some one, braver than the rest, at last comes up; he is given a string of beads, and is told that if the chief comes he will get a great many more. Cupidity is, in the end, stronger than fear; the chief comes and receives his presents, the so-called interpreter pretends to explain the treaty to the chief. The chief does not understand a word of it, but he looks pleased, as he receives another present of beads; a mark is made on a printed treaty by the chief, and another by the interpreter, the vagrant, who professes to be the representative of a great empire, signs his name. The chief takes the paper, but with some hesitation, as he regards the whole performance as a new and therefore dangerous piece of witchcraft. The boat sails away, and the new ally and *protégé* of England or France immediately throws the treaty into the fire.

Kavalli was an important personage, and it was desirable that he should perform this little comedy with us before he should do so with the Belgians, and as I was unselfish enough not to wish to deprive Moffat of the delights of a boating trip, I deputed him to go in my stead to the south end of the Lake, where Kavalli has a village to which, if sent for, he would come to meet him. Moffat's experiences were much the same as mine; he, too, had his daily storms and drenchings, and had been

nearly upset by the hippopotami. Until one is used to them there is a good deal trying to the nerves in these voyages. The storms are frequent, often severe, and always sudden; but the boat, though frail in appearance, was a good sea boat, and in open water there was no danger at all. The lightning is startling when it bursts at the distance of a few feet, but as a matter of fact it never did hit the boat, though the danger from lightning is not altogether an imaginary one, for the houses of three English officials have been struck at different times, and on one occasion the lightning burnt through the bed of the owner, who fortunately had not retired to rest; the house of another at Entebbi was struck whilst the owner was away, and the whole of his property was destroyed. And again the chief Ayara, whose village I had just visited, was afterwards killed by lightning.

The hippopotami are another cause for concern. To canoes they are a real danger, for they often wantonly attack them, but with our boat I think they were more moved by fear and curiosity than by malice. The boat would get into a herd of them, and they would snort and splutter, dive, and rise again all around 'us, and follow us for some distance. Once, when Forster was in the boat, one rose from straight beneath it and lifted it and its load of twenty men right up out of the water, nearly upsetting it.

While Moffat was away I made a patrol into Masindi, a thickly populated district, about 40 miles from Hoima, and in which Kabarega had his capital when Sir S. Baker first visited him. We met with no opposition, as the inhabitants ran away at our approach, but an incident occurred which throws a curious light on the uncivilised character. It was the rule to shoot at sight any Wunyoro whom we encountered carrying a gun. This may appear cruel, but was unfortunately necessary, and in the long run merciful, for it was impossible to capture such an one, as he would have run into the long grass, and then turned and shot one of us from behind a tree. Success in this would have led others to follow his example, and these little successes would have encouraged the Wunyoro to resist us, and thus prolong the war. Four men always walked in front of me as an advance guard; their eyes were sharper than mine, and from a public point of view, were one of them to fall, his death would be less serious. We had come to a place where the road took a sharp turn to the left, so I could not see any distance in front of me, but I heard a cheerful voice singing and another one laughing; we turned the corner and I saw a tall straight Wunyoro youth with his gun over his shoulder, and by his side a well-grown Wunyoro girl. He was singing, and had one arm round her neck and was tickling her under the chin—she was laughing, and smiling, and he had tied a wreath of flowers around her head. Before I could

fully realise what I was seeing, one of my guard put up his rifle and fired ; the youth threw up his arms, and fell on his face quite dead. The girl, however, appeared scarcely startled, only turning sharply round, and without even looking at her unfortunate lover, walked on quickly in front of us, and after a few minutes threw away her flowers. We shortly came into camp. I lost sight of her and soon had almost forgotten the incident. About a fortnight afterwards I was standing at the stream at Hoima, when I saw a procession of women carrying pitchers on their heads, gaily singing on their way to fetch water, and their leader was the Wunyoro girl. I then made enquiries, and found she was living with the man who had killed her lover.

I soon received instructions from Colville as to my Belgian Soudanese. I myself had known that we were short of soldiers, and it had struck me that my find would be a very useful reinforcement ; I had therefore thought of trying to make them follow me at once into Unyoro. I had given the idea up, firstly for fear that it might involve us in complications with the Congo Free State ; secondly, because I was unwilling to give orders which I could only carry out by the goodwill of the recipients ; but chiefly, because of my natural indolence. Also Purkiss had reported the mouth of the Victoria Nile as being blocked with sudd, and, that being the case, the direct route by crossing the White Nile at Ayara's and the Victoria Nile at

Magungo, was precluded, and I should have been compelled to make a long and difficult march round the south end of the Lake, through a mountainous country with a hostile population. To do so with the 350 soldiers of which the force consisted would not have been a matter of much difficulty; but though I had seen only half the force, I had seen at least 5000 persons — soldiers, followers, slaves, women, and children. All these I should have had to take with me, for if left behind they would have been exterminated by the Lurs. The loss of life from enemies, sickness, and starvation during such a march would have been appalling. I had therefore decided to take only half measures (which are always vicious), and, by conniving at a sham, to leave these Soudanese where they were, nominally under our control, but in reality an independent horde of robbers. Colonel Colvile, however, was always prompt and vigorous in his action, never afraid of responsibility, nor would he admit the possibility of any difficulties in the execution of enterprises he thought necessary, whether he himself or his subordinates were concerned. Lawlessness and trespass on our territory were not to be permitted for an instant, and his orders were that I should bring the whole horde into Unyoro, where they could be under proper supervision. As to how to do this he left that entirely to me.

Accordingly, on the 1st May, I sailed with Forster

and a Soudanese captain, one Rehan Rashid,* who had been General Gordon's bugler. He was a man of some ability, knew personally Emin Pasha, and was generally liked by every one in his force, and I rightly thought that he would be very useful as a general agent and go-between if any difficulties arose.

On arrival at Mahaji we were received with the usual ceremony. A house had been built for me, and I was addressed by the high-sounding title of "Governor of the east and west," with, I suppose, the local limitations of Lake Albert, suppressed but understood. I told them what were my instructions, and they all agreed to them, provided that Ahmad Ali, the Bimbashi (*chef de bataillon*), who, with the other company, had not yet come down from the highlands, was willing. This proviso was rather serious, for Rehan Rashid told me that Ahmad Ali was an overbearing and sullen man, who had been one of the chief instigators of the mutiny against Emin, and was regarded by the soldiers as a king, that consequently they would never refuse to obey him, and that he was now in possession of an enormous number of slaves which, from his acquaintance with Baker and Gordon, he must know he would not be allowed to keep. He knew also, that our

* This Rehan Rashid remained faithful through the mutiny, and is now (1898) in the Uganda Rifles. Ahmad Ali was killed at Kabagambe, having been engaged as a native officer by Ternan, who was short of these; but though induced to join the mutineers at Lubwa's, he had no hand in the murders or plots.



CROSSING THE NHE AT KAUNGO, ABOVE WADLI AL. 1ST MAY 1894.

discipline was unlike the lax discipline of the Congo State, and it would be correspondingly distasteful to him.

There was nothing to be done except to wait till Ahmad Ali came, and meanwhile to endeavour, by assiduous courting, affability, and promises, to ingratiate myself with those around me, so that there might be at least a chance of some of them following me to Unyoro. I despatched Forster to explore the mouth of the Victoria Nile; for I was by no means satisfied that it was blocked by sudd, and thought it possible that Purkiss had been deceived by the narrow entrance being masked by a swamp island. This view proved correct, for Forster, after rowing about for a short while, found the entrance, and sailed a mile or two up it. This was great and good news, for if I could persuade the troops to come with me, they would only have to march about 25 miles down the river to Ayara's, where I should ferry them across, then march 18 miles across the horn of land that lies between the White and Victoria Niles to the ferry opposite Magungo, having crossed which they would be in Unyoro.

After four days the Bimbashi arrived. He was followed by a large number of soldiers, and, as he walked through the camp, others crowded round him, and tried to kiss his hand. I found him very polite, but rather "hoity-toity." He confined his remarks to greeting me and saying he was tired, and that with

my permission he would retire, but he would do himself the honour of paying me another visit in the afternoon.

I had noticed that the flags of the Congo Free State among the followers were largely outnumbered by those of the Ottoman Empire. This was a symptom of feelings which I thought I could turn to use. So Forster and I discarded the national hat, and both put on the tarboosh, then I stuck an Egyptian flag alongside the Union Jack outside my house, went to my despatch box and pulled out my old Egyptian commission, which I put into my pocket. At about four o'clock Ahmad Ali, with all the principal officers and the clerk, came down to my house. After giving them permission to sit down, I told the Bimbashi that I had sent for him as I did not wish him and his troops to stay in that part of the country, and that he was immediately to tie up his baggage, and to follow me the next day. He replied by asking me who I was, and what authority I had over him. I told him that I was in command of all the British territory in the Nile district, that the English Governor in Uganda had instructed me not to allow him to stay where he was; and that now he had come into our country, he had *ipso facto* fallen under my command. To this he replied that the country was not English, that he had received orders to come to where he now was, and he meant to stay. I then asked him in whose territory did he think he was.

He said he did not know, but that the Belgians had sent him to this place; he added that of course formerly it was the property of Egypt, but that the Effendina (the Khedive) had removed his hands from it. I replied that he had done nothing of the sort; on the contrary, he had commissioned the English to take care of it for him till it should please him to resume it. (This, of course, was a diplomatic fiction.)

I then remembered how a philosophic historian had expressed his opinion that all religions to the vulgar were equally true, to the philosopher equally false, and to the statesman equally useful. It also came to my mind that there was no form of argument equal to the platonic one if one wished to conceal a fallacy, so I began to ask questions.

“Am I right in assuming that you are a Muslim, Bimbashi, or would you prefer my calling you by some other name?”

“There is no god but God, and Muhammad is his Prophet,” etc., etc.

“I believe it is held by civilised Muslims, or at any rate by the subjects of the Ottoman Empire, that our Lord, the Padishah, is the successor of the Prophet, and is the Commander of the Faithful. Is this true, or is he something else?”

“He is nothing else.”

“Is it the duty of all believers to listen to the words of their Commander, or to those of a foreign Christian king?”

"Most decidedly to those of the Commander."

"And the Christian king has no claims upon them."

"None whatever."

"Does the Commander exercise personal supervision over every part of the Dar-ul-Islam, or does he, in distant parts, delegate his authority to his Ameers?"

"I think so."

"But let there be no doubt about it; perhaps I have not made myself clear. Is the appointment of Ameers lawful, or is it forbidden?"

"Of course it is lawful."

"And is it not binding on the Faithful to obey the Ameers?"

"It is binding."

"Is Effendina an Ameer of the Padishah?"

"He is."

"And his orders should be obeyed?"

"Certainly."

Then I slowly pulled the Khedive's commission out of my pocket, pressed his seal to my forehead, and then, handing it to the Bimbashi, I told him to read Effendina's orders, and to obey them. He kissed the seal, and handed it to the clerk, who, having done likewise, read it through, and then said it was a true commission. The Bimbashi then came forward, and wished to kiss my hand, but I told him we were now comrades, and that I could not allow it. He said

he would go wherever I wanted, but that he would require four days to collect food, and I of course agreed to this.

Though I was delighted with the ease with which I had accomplished what I feared would be a difficult matter, yet I felt rather sorry for my victim. There had been a struggle between what he knew was his interest, and what he considered his duty, and though his mistaken idea of duty had won, it had left the poor man much depressed. This depression remained all the time he was with me, and it was not decreased when, on arrival in Uganda, he was packed off to live on two small allotments of land, without pay, pension, or servants. However, when I last saw him, he was fairly contented, and was earning a decent living by trading in goats. He appeared pleased to see me, and was magnanimous enough not to rebroach me.

Three days after our interview the exodus began. They started in two batches, and on the fourth day, after I had seen the last person out of the camp, and old Takenda, the Lur chief before alluded to, beginning to set fire to their houses, Forster and I went down to the *Alexandra*, and sailed after them, reaching Ayara's at sunset. The next morning the travellers by land began to arrive, and were promptly ferried over, fifty at a time, and set down on the eastern bank, on a low, swampy piece of ground. The river was narrow, and the passage went on quickly, so that by the

time Ahmad Ali's company arrived, half of the first batch had been disposed of. By noon on the fifth day the whole had crossed. By counting the number of times that the boat had made the passage, I computed that the passengers altogether amounted to a little over 10,000. The Bimbashi informed me that probably about 5,000 had deserted, and were trying to make their way back to their own countries. A party of twenty soldiers also had slipped off in the night to the Dervishes at Rejaf.

We had now been eight days out, food was running short, we were in a foodless country, and a great many of the women and children began to suffer. This was partly owing to their own improvidence, for they were employed as carriers, and some of them never seemed to stop eating till they had devoured the whole of their loads, which they accomplished in about three days, so many of them had now been five days without food, and the weaker ones were beginning to die. The sight of these poor wretched slave women was deplorable; stark naked and famished they staggered under their loads, and were slapped and shrieked at by their mistresses. The Soudanese soldiers and their women had been, at one time, slaves themselves, but now they were free people and slave owners, and their arrogance and cruelty were unbounded. The women were ten times worse than the men; they were perfect furies. Their appearance

was loathsome; their hair was worn like a wig, flapping over their ears and neck in short ringlets, soaked in castor oil, and encrusted with dirt. They were clad in a single piece of calico that had once been white but was now black and greasy, and they exhaled a sickening and repulsive stench. This description must not be taken as resulting from a white man's prejudice; they excite equal disgust among every coloured tribe except their own; so much so that although conjugal fidelity is unknown amongst them, their husbands' honour is in no danger from the Zanzibari or the Waganda; the latter hold them in particular contempt, and always call them "black sows."

As soon as all had crossed I had the boat washed out and fumigated, and rowed up stream, and pitched my camp about a mile above the rest, and then sent off Forster in the boat to go round to meet us at the crossing at Magungo. The next morning we all started. Our route lay over a large undulating plain; the grass was young and fine, and though the path had disappeared from want of passengers, the going was easy. Our column was in single file, and several miles long; an attack on our left was to be feared from the Shoolis, and the soldiers therefore made a separate column, split up into small parties, on that flank. Game was plentiful, and on one occasion a herd of seven giraffes trotted up quietly to within 100 yards of us, craned their heads forward

to see what we were, and then, having satisfied their curiosity, trotted off again.*

Eighteen miles is a long march for half-starved women and children, and some hundreds never saw the end of it. This was unavoidable, as we had to hurry on to get food, and as there was no water on the road, we could not divide the distance. By one o'clock the head of the column had reached the river. I immediately sent out men to shoot hart-beeste, and they brought back six. The column continued to arrive, and by sunset all who could ever reach their destination had done so. At about four o'clock the next morning I was awakened by a strange bugle sound. I sent for Rehan Rashid, and asked him what was going on. He seemed surprised that I did not know the call, for it had been familiar to him from his childhood, and he explained that it was the "kuya," or raid. On principle I objected to raids, but we wanted food, the people were fast dying of starvation, so I allowed this one to start, and they returned at sunset with 200 goats.

Forster had not arrived, and I began to fear that the passage that he had found had been an *impasse*, and that I should have to follow the Victoria Nile, through an unknown and hostile country where food was probably scarce, right up to the Victoria Nyanza. This would have been at least a month's march, and certain death to nearly all the slaves. But the next

* Major Thruston would not allow them to be molested.

day Forster arrived ; he had been detained by head winds, and was worn out with fever and exposure. After some breakfast he was a little better, so he and I and our following crossed the river, and pitched our tents inside General Gordon's fort. The river on the Shooli side was lined with a fringe of sudd for about 100 yards, but as I had on the previous day made a causeway across it, the passage began at once. On the Magungo side there was a good landing-place, alongside which the steamer had been moored in the time of the Egyptians. The passage, I saw with concern, would be a long affair, as the river was 1000 yards broad, and each voyage there and back, took an hour. At that rate we could only bring across about 600 souls a day. Fortunately I had found a few canoes, which were an assistance.

Magungo is a very unhealthy place. While it was held by Egypt its garrison suffered more than any other in Unyoro. Forster, who had been some years in Africa, had never known what fever was till he had come to Unyoro. I had fed regularly on quinine, consuming 15 grains a day, and had hitherto obtained exemption, but now we both fell ill. Malarial fever is very disagreeable, but is not, I think, dangerous till after one has undergone a long course of it, when, weakened by bad food, exposure, and fatigue, one's strength is insufficient to resist its ravages. Then a European often dies, though a black man, who may have it more often, and quite

as severely, usually recovers. I suddenly felt very cold; the sun was shining, and the temperature was 100° Fahr. in my tent, but it felt as if an iceberg were drifting by. I wrapped myself up, drank tea, and smoked, but it was of no use, I could not get warm. I then put on my great-coat and ran round and round the fort; this tired but did not warm me, so I returned to my tent, where, after a while, I felt myself getting warmer and warmer inwardly, though pleasantly cool on the surface of my body, and a delightful feeling of languor came over me. I found my clinical thermometer, and took my temperature; it was 105°. I then swallowed a large dose of Warburg's tincture, covered myself up with blankets, and soon the pleasant feeling left me, and I began to perspire profusely. At sunset I woke up feeling wretched, and again took my temperature, which I found to be normal. I made a feeble attempt to eat, and went to bed, and the next morning, when I awoke, I felt as well as usual. Such is the history of a typical attack. I was fortunate enough to throw it off in one day; Forster, on the other hand, was ill for some days. If one dies of it, it is usually during the pleasant languor stages, and this must be considered a compensation.

- After four days I was greatly surprised, and rather selfishly pleased, to be informed that two more days would complete the passage; I had already despatched one company to Hoima under Rehan

Rashid, and on the morning of the seventh day Forster followed with the remainder. It appeared that but little over 5000 had crossed into Unyoro; about 5000 therefore had disappeared between Ayara's and Magungo. Where they had gone was a mystery. Several hundreds had probably died, but where had the remainder of over 4000 vanished? Doubtless many had never left Ayara's, many had turned back, and many may have gone off to the Shooli country, but still I was unable to account for the disappearance of such a large number, and nobody could throw any light on the matter. As soon as Forster had started I got into the boat and sailed away as fast as I could for Kibiro, and in three days' time was back at Hoima.

After a few days the first company under Rehan Rashid arrived. I had no intention of allowing such a filthy, disorderly crowd to eat up my provisions, and by their disgusting habits to make my station uninhabitable; so, without allowing them to halt, I packed them off to a fertile district, about 10 miles off, on the way to Uganda, where they could stuff themselves at the expense of the Wunyoro until I could send them to Uganda. Forster's company arrived almost immediately after them, and were sent to join the others. I then spent a week with the clerk in making out lists and inventories of arms, chattels, and slaves, and when these were completed poor Forster had to go with both companies to Uganda, there to hand them over to the Colonel.

I was heartily glad to get rid of them, and wished the Colonel joy of his acquisition. He, as soon as he saw them, handed them over to Cunningham (my old commanding officer in Egypt, who had just arrived) to separate the sheep from the goats, and to get them into some sort of order. After the counting was completed it was found that there were about 300 well-armed and fairly well-trained soldiers, about 50 old worn-out creatures, and about 1000 young men among the slaves who could be enlisted and turned into good soldiers when required.

Forster then came back to Hoima. He had had the worst time of any one, and was thoroughly worn out with fever and fatigue, but after a few days, when he thoroughly realised he had seen the last of his *compagnons de voyage*, he rapidly recovered. I think that both he and I looked back upon our conducting of this exodus as a terrible dream. Only 3000 reached Uganda, a large portion of the missing ones had doubtless dispersed in Unyoro, but for some weeks the road was strewn with the bones of those who had fallen by the way. Within half a mile of the fort I saw a flock of guinea fowl picking at the corpse of a young girl, and a hyena making off with the leg of a man. I cannot account for so many deaths occurring in Unyoro, for food was abundant and sufficient for every one. In one respect we had been fortunate, for we had been only twice attacked by the Wunyoro. The first time was at Magungo at

sunset. I was in my bath when I heard the familiar rattle, but the soldiers knew the game well, and soon drove them off, so that by the time I had hastily clothed myself, and had overtaken my men, the enemy were in full retreat. They, however, had taken with them a few children, who were probably not sorry to go. The second time was at Kitobe, about 7 miles from Kitanwe, but on this occasion the Wunyoros were few, and the attack was not delivered with any vigour.

At Hoima I found that the last two caravans which had arrived from Uganda had been attacked on the road by parties sent from Mount Masaja Makuro. I had intended for some time past to pay these people a visit, but had been prevented by having to fetch my friends from Mahaji. Now that that task was finished I could turn my attention to the Wunyoros.

On the 20th of May, at 5 A.M., I marched out with one company and Amara's irregulars. At first the road lay through an overgrown and deserted country, but after about 10 miles we arrived in a well-cultivated district, which had not been abandoned by its inhabitants. As we passed through it the Wunyoros retired before us towards Masaja Makuro. At one o'clock the mountain was close in front of us, and I could see that it was a steep table mountain, rising out of the plain to the height of about 1000 feet. It is very precipitous and almost inaccessible; its upper slopes were ascended by two zigzag paths. At the foot of the mountain was a numerous settlement of semi-per-

manent houses, and on the summit a large standing camp, crowded with a mass of Wunyoro, who watched the approach of our force in silence. On arriving at the foot I sent, under cover of the surrounding bush, two sections of the soldiers and the irregulars, each to one side of the hill, with instructions to cut off the retreat of the Wunyoro, and then myself with the remaining fifty men commenced the ascent on the side on which one of the paths went up. After a few minutes we were greeted with an avalanche of stones, and this was kept up until the summit was carried. These stones were fortunately of soft sandstone, and a great proportion broke before attaining a velocity which would have made any attempt to avoid them useless.

When about two-thirds of the ascent had been effected the Wunyoro began a heavy fire; as usual it was too high, and therefore harmless. Had it not been for the very loose formation adopted, the losses from the stones must, however, have proved very considerable to the assailants; even as it was, every one without exception was more or less knocked about; one man had his arm broken, and some others received internal injuries.

The ascent, necessarily very slow, took about three-quarters of an hour, and towards the end we were compelled to climb on our hands and knees. The Wunyoro kept under the cover of a rough stone parapet, so any attempt to dislodge them by fire would

have been useless. When within a few yards of the summit a halt was made to take breath, to form a better line, and to allow the short-winded to come up. Then the bugle sounded the charge, and the men, cheering loudly, advanced with a rush through the spears, stones, and slugs, and reached the top. The Wunyoro, who had apparently never imagined that the heights could be carried, were completely disorganised; they offered no resistance, but stood staring stupidly round them, and were shot down as quickly as the soldiers could reload their rifles.

This slaughter lasted for about two minutes, when the remainder, suddenly awakening, turned, and with marvellous activity bounded down the sides of the hill. At its foot they afterwards suffered some further loss at the hands of the two sections and the irregulars, who were waiting for them. Among the killed was one of Kabarega's sons, who was second in command to Yabaswezi, the chief of the district. Yabaswezi himself was the first to run away, and he escaped.

The Wunyoro, in standing to meet us, appear to have been actuated by a misplaced confidence in the impregnability of their position, and in the small numbers of their assailants. Although they had ample notice of the approaching attack, they had made no attempt to remove their women, flocks, and household goods.

Masaja Makuro is undoubtedly a strong position, and if resolutely defended almost impregnable. In

previous wars with the Waganda it had always been held to be unassailable, and had never been attacked. The soldiers had behaved admirably in the assault, and had been well led by their company officers. After a short rest we made our way back to the camp of Ahmad Ali and the Belgian Soudanese, which, after a long and tiring day, we reached in a downfall of rain, at seven o'clock.

The Wunyoro had received a severe lesson. It had the effect of removing the only obstacle to the security of the road to Uganda, and we were never troubled by them again from that direction.



● SASA MAKURO, MAJOR IHURSTON AND ADVANCED PARTY CROSSING THE RIVER ON THE WAY
TO CAPTURE THE STRONGHOLD.

CHAPTER VI

THE OCCUPATION OF UNYORO (*continued*)

Gibb's Journey to Umruli—His Return to England—A Visit to Wadelai—The Chief's Roguery—Witchcraft—Establishing a Post at Mahaji Kabir—Forster's Adventures—Weekly Raids—A Visit to the Semliki—And to Insabé—Unrest on the Roads—Kabarega's grand *coup*—Frustrated by the Action at Mapala—Attack on Fort Kafu—To Mahaji Kabir against the Lurs—Anxiety and Grey Hairs—Serenades—Forster arrives—His Misfortunes—Our Losses—An Ivory Thief—Raid to Mashudi—Kabarega is surprised—Return March—Ambushes—To Mahaji again—Cunningham arrives—Colville falls ill and returns to England—Disappointment—Soudanese Soldiers—My Colleagues.

IT had been reported that Kabarega had hidden all his ivory at Umruli (Mruli), near the place where the Kafu joins the Victoria Nile; Gibb therefore was despatched from Uganda with a mixed force of soldiers and Waganda, to find it. Mr Grant was to join him there, with a small force and some canoes from Usoga. They arrived at Umruli simultaneously, but there was no Wunyoro army to meet them, and the few armed inhabitants of the place had, very wisely, run away. The ivory was supposed to be on an island, but the island did not exist, and the ivory, wherever it might have

been, was not to be found, so the force had to return empty-handed as it came.

Poor Gibb had begun to suffer from rheumatism even before he had first reached Uganda; it grew worse and worse, and during this expedition he had to be carried in a hammock; it rained heavily every day, the swamps were numerous, some being so large that it took many hours to cross them; this was the finishing stroke, and he became so ill that on his return to Uganda he was at once invalided back to England.

After the taking of Masaja Makuro there was a period of quiet, which I took advantage of to go to Wadelai, to see how Owen's garrison was getting on, and to give them their pay. With the stream in our favour it was only three days' sail. The river was everywhere nearly 1000 yards broad, and fringed with sudd, so, even if we had been attacked, by keeping in mid-stream we should have been quite safe. Everywhere as we passed, the Lurs ran away from their villages. I, however, landed occasionally and coaxed them back again. The country on each side was a fine open, rolling plain, with here and there clumps of timber and of the *Borassus* palm; game, elephants, hippopotami, and crocodiles abounded. The villages were few and the population scanty.

Just before we reached Wadelai we came to what would have been a lake had it not been over-

grown with papyrus; the passages through the weeds were narrow and tortuous, and through them the river ran like a mill stream. At the further mouth of the lake was a hill of the shape of an ant heap, and on its top and around its base were a number of grass houses. This was Wadelai. Some hundreds of Lurs came running down and lined the bank; they were quite friendly, and a few of them greeted us in Arabic. Further down the stream, on the other side, was a lower hill, around which, peeping over the long grass, I could see a line of earthenworks. This was the old Egyptian fort. I looked in vain for the English flag, and I looked in vain for the garrison. All that I could see was a crowd of naked savages. On asking them where was their chief, I was told that he was in his house. I then told them to go and fetch him; some of them ran off. I waited for nearly an hour, but he did not come. I then sent him a message to tell him that I was going down to the fort, and would pitch my camp there; that he was to come over to me, and I would give him the pay for the garrison and for himself. In the afternoon a message came from the chief to say that it was his rule never to cross the river. As there were with me only sixteen Zanzibari porters, nothing could be done except to pocket the affront, so I sent him back word that I would wait for him till ten o'clock the next morning, and that if he did not choose to come, I did not choose to pay.

The night was spent in the most hideous discomfort, a dark mist rose from the river and with it myriads of tiny mosquitoes, who laughed at the defence of a mosquito net, and no one slept a wink the whole night. Ten o'clock came but no chief; we therefore made our maxim gun ready for action, and rowed up stream. We were followed by a fleet of friendly canoes, and on reaching the chief's landing-place, we lay on our oars. A crowd was there to meet us, and one of them asked me not to go away, but to stay and give them their beads. I replied that they should have nothing at all, and if ever I came back again I would come back with soldiers, whom they knew well, and who would burn the houses of their chief over his head. Then they said they knew it was all the chief's fault. A minute afterwards an opening was made in the crowd, and a tall man, surrounded by a number of spearmen, made his way to the front. This was the Chief Ali, son of Wadelai. I asked him why he had not come to see me, and where was his garrison, and where was his flag; but he did not answer. Ali, for all I know, may have often been very near to death, but he had certainly never been nearer to it than he was then. He had been by his own confession guilty of lying, and of gross deception, and, as a commander of a garrison, of mutiny; no punishment therefore could have been too severe. I was sitting behind the maxim gun,

I was in the worst of tempers, I had only to push the button, and Ali would have been no more—and I very nearly did it. I was restrained, not by any compunction about killing him, but by the knowledge that the present attitude of the tribe did us no harm, and that were it to be turned into a hostile one it might possibly cause us some inconvenience in the future.* We rowed away. Since then other English officers have been to Wadelai, and though they have given this ruffian costly presents when they have sent for him, he invariably has refused to come, and has even gone so far as to make hostile demonstrations; on reporting this affair to Colonel Colvile, he declared the garrison disbanded, and instructed me to send a message to Ali to tell him that we did not want to have anything to do with him. On my way back I stopped at Ayara's village, and recovered from him the rifle he had stolen from Purkiss; the poor man seemed rather glad to get rid of it. Ayara was afterwards killed by lightning.

Shortly after I had returned to Hoima an incident happened which caused considerable perturbation among the soldiers. In the early morning, on their passing by the stream, at the spot where I had had a shallow basin for drinking water scooped out of the rock, they had found a dead crocodile and a human skull with a live cormorant tied to it by the feet. A

* Ali is now (1899) in favour, and subsidised.

little further on a goat had been killed and half buried, and across the path there were very quaint miniature bridges made of grass. This was Kabarega's handiwork ; physical forces having failed him, he had resorted to spiritual ones, and, like a Pope, had laid us under an interdict. The Soudanese are nominally Muslims, but the only outward signs of their religion are their dancing on holidays while singing the creed, and on being asked whether it is going to rain, replying that "God knows." Otherwise they retain their pagan beliefs, the chief among which is that in witchcraft, and for this belief they have some justification. Science of course does not recognise it, but subjectively it does exist, and is very powerful. I have known two men die in a few days for no other reason than that they believed that they were bewitched. Every one therefore was much frightened, and it was remembered that after a similar circumstance at Wadelai there had been an epidemic of small-pox, of which 600 people had died. No one was willing to remove the pernicious instruments, and I was compelled to send out Amara * to kidnap some Unyoro, and to compel them to carry away their own charms. The basin was then cleared out, and, being purified, allowed to refill.

• I had received orders to establish a post on the west of Lake Albert, and selected Mahaji Saghir as

* Amara is the friendly Wunyoro chief who was in '97 poisoned by Kabarega's order, and must not be confused with Ayara.

being the most suitable spot, as Takenda, whose country was much harried by his neighbours, was willing to have us, and there was a good harbour and a plentiful supply of food.

Forster and I went off and marched our small body of men along the shore of the lake to Butiaba, at the north end where it becomes narrow, and from there we ferried across to Mahaji. There we built a small redoubt, and leaving a garrison of twenty men, returned to Unyoro. However, during our absence, news had been received of the signing of an Anglo-Belgian agreement, in which, among other clauses, it was stipulated we should give the Congo Free State a small shore frontage on Lake Albert, and it appeared that Mahaji Saghir was situated in the ceded territory. It became necessary therefore to move the post further south, so I sent Forster back to march south for about 20 miles, to reconnoitre for a good site, and then to send the boat back for me to bring over some more troops and construct a fort.

On arrival at Mahaji, Forster sent the baggage by boat, and himself, with the small garrison, marched by land. There was no road along the lake, so he had to travel inland among the mountains. The route was extremely difficult and overgrown, and he was soon beset by numbers of Takenda's enemies, the followers of a chief called Uma. These followed him the whole way. They were very shy, and

generally kept out of striking distance ; nevertheless, they found several opportunities when among the rocks of creeping near in safety, and favouring him with a shower of poisoned arrows. One of our men was killed, and some were wounded. Forster himself received an arrow in his neck. When the poison is fresh, these wounds are nearly always fatal unless they are quickly sucked, to do which, without any question, when their husbands have been hit, is one of the conjugal duties of the Soudanese wife. Forster, for a consideration, induced one of the soldiers to suck his wound, and was none the worse for either the wound or the sucking, though this remedy is not free from another danger.

He struck the lake at Mahaji Kabir, where Emin Pasha formerly had a fort, but taking into consideration the hostility of the inhabitants, he very properly decided it was unsafe to send half his twenty men back to fetch me, and embarked with all his force, and came back to Unyoro. It was inconvenient for me to leave Unyoro at the time, so the establishment of the fort was delayed for a while.

Soon after Forster's return he had another and still more disagreeable adventure. I had sent him to the Kafu to escort a caravan returning to Uganda with some of Kabarega's ivory which I had discovered. When he had gone about half way, a signal shot was fired from a hill, and shortly afterwards the Wunyoro attacked, and continued



THE WEST SHORE OF LAKE AUBERL.
VIEW FROM THE FORT AT MAHVI KABIR. 20TH OCTOBER 1894.

for about two miles to follow up the caravan, and fire on it from amongst the long grass. Forster was greatly outnumbered, and owing to the length of the column it was extremely vulnerable; but he threw out sharp-shooters to the flanks, who kept the Wunyoro off. His donkey was shot dead under him, and his Zanzibari cook, who walked in front of him, and three soldiers were killed, and four were severely wounded. This was a considerable loss; for his armed force was under forty men; but luckily the Wunyoro are extremely bad shots, otherwise it would have been much more severe. It is greatly to the credit of the unarmed Zanzibari porters that they kept steadily plodding along, and that only one man threw away his load.

On hearing of this affair I at once started off, and made a very complete reconnaissance of the whole country, and at last came on signs of a concentration at the house of a chief, who had always been active on behalf of Kabarega. I burnt his village, destroyed his banana plantations, and, following up the tracks, came to the scene of the engagement. Having seen no traces of a camp, I presumed that the force that had attacked Forster was a local levy collected by this man, who was aware that the day for the departure of our monthly caravan had arrived; I afterwards learnt that this was so, but that they had also been reinforced by a party of 200 guns, specially despatched by

Kabarega, who had been kept well informed of all our movements.

I had not yet visited the extreme southern end of the Lake (Albert). I wished to explore the mouth of the Semliki river, which connects Lake Albert Edward with the Albert Nyanza, and also if possible to show myself to a Wagiro chief called Katyonje, who had been raiding Kavalli's, and then to go on to Insabé, Kavalli's port, on the lake shore. I should have then, at one time or another, circumnavigated the whole of the lake, which had hitherto been done only, I think, by Colonel Mason Bey in a steamer from Wadelai; and though the outline of the lake was correctly mapped, the names and positions of the different streams that flow into it were not so, and the names of the villages were in most cases obsolete. The latter defect was inevitable, as most places in Central Africa have no names of their own, but are called after the chiefs who live in them; the chief dies, or goes somewhere else, and the place is known by a new name. Wadelai, for instance, is the nickname given by the soldiers to the father of the present chief of that district, and it means "the son of the regiment."

I set off in the middle of July, and with a fair wind reached the south-east corner of the lake in two days. The coast the whole way was bounded by the precipitous Unyoro escarpment, over which fell three streams in narrow waterfalls, at the foot

of each of which had been formed by their deposit a fertile tract of land. These were the only places that were inhabited.

On the third day we went to look for the mouth of the Semliki, but the whole of the southern end of the lake was a wilderness of sudd; and the lake was very shallow, so that the canoes of the few Wunyoro that we saw were propelled by punting poles. These, however, on seeing us, quickly disappeared in the sudd, and we therefore could learn nothing of which was the right channel of the Semliki. We searched the whole day long, rowing up every creek that might have been the mouth. Night came, and we had not found it, so we dropped anchor and prepared to sleep in the boat. At about ten o'clock we heard some voices, and shortly afterwards detected the outline of a canoe. The moon had not yet risen, and it was quite dark. The canoe came nearer, the owner perceived us, but, mistaking us for another canoe, asked us what success we had had; the interpreter very truly replied that it had been indifferent; the canoe came nearer, and then we were discovered. Off the man shot like a startled fish, but our anchor was up, and we were resting on our oars, and in a few minutes he was safely in our net, hauled into our boat, and his leg tied to a thwart. He was a follower of Katyonje, and knew every inch of the country, so we had at length obtained a guide.

The next morning we reached a narrow opening, about 40 yards wide in the sudd. This was the Semliki. In the rainy season this river brings down large quantities of mud, and has thus caused the shallowing up of the southern end of the lake, and the formation of the great tracks of sudd. Its entry into the lake is peculiar. While throwing off on each side of it sudd, consisting of reeds and trees which take root and collect the mud and smaller weeds, it has forced its passage for some miles into the interior of the lake, and it maintains in its self-made bed a strong current, while on either side the water is perfectly still. Judging by the difference of elevation between the lakes Albert and Albert Edward, there must be a number of rapids which preclude the possibility of free navigation. We found the stream so strong that eight men, pulling hard, could scarcely make way against it, so we gave up the attempt, returned to the open water, and continued our journey to Insabé. As we approached this place our guide became visibly disturbed, he soon began to blubber, and tears to roll down his cheeks in torrents. He was afraid of being killed by Kavalli's people, so I told him to tell his master Katyonje to come to meet me, and then I let him go.

We were well received at Insabé, and the inhabitants begged me to kill the elephants which daily destroyed their cultivation, but I had no suitable rifle. Moffat, who had been there before me, had killed one

which possessed a pair of magnificent tusks, each of which weighed over 100 lbs. I sent a message to Kavalli to send a bullock for me to ride up to meet him, but apparently he did not wish me to come, for he sent his father to say he had none sufficiently trained for the purpose. This I knew was untrue, so I did not leave behind the present I had intended for him. But I was not sorry, as I was ill with fever. Katyonje arrived in the course of next day, and I made peace between him and Kavalli's father. Kavalli has since died of small-pox, and his village in the hills has been destroyed by the Congo Free State forces.

From all the information I have been able to gather, this State is extremely badly administered. Many of its officers, finding themselves freed from the restraints of civilisation and of public opinion, indulge in all manner of excesses. This absence of public opinion is no doubt one of the attractions of life in Africa, but to avoid demoralisation one should possess a high private opinion of one's own.

On the third day we started homewards. Being ill, I decided to go straight back, but the Zanzibari, in spite of the compass, did not steer straight, and we had been 36 hours in the boat before we reached Kibiro. . . .

On my return Moffat reported that he had noticed a certain amount of unrest amongst the people along the roads, and that he had seen parties of Wunyoro

moving among the hills. An old man of sinister appearance, clothed in a bizarre costume of skins and feathers, with a leathern bag full of old teeth and bones, and a horn decorated with rude ornamentation, had been seen prowling about near the fort, and had been recognised as a wizard. A slaughtered bullock and a goat, as well as other articles of witchcraft, had been seen on the road; doubtless these things portended something, but I did not then take much heed.

On 25th August the sound of firing was heard at night, and the next morning a reconnoitring patrol was sent out, but returned, having seen nothing; in the afternoon a large party of Wunyoro were seen on the top of Mapala Hill which overlooked our fort. A patrol was sent out in the evening which reported the existence of three large camps on the site of Kabarega's former village.

In the early morning of the 27th a party was despatched to watch them, while I made arrangements for a night march, to attack them before daybreak the next day. However, the party returned at nine o'clock, and reported that the Wunyoro had struck their camp, and were marching on the fort. The troops immediately fell in, and leaving half a company, the Zanzibaris, and the sick to guard the fort under Moffat, I marched out to meet them with a company and a half, some of Amara's regulars and the Waganda Muslim colony. At the distance of about a mile and a half from the fort the Wunyoro were first encountered,

drawn up in a line, and concealed in the long grass on the ridge in front of the first affluent of the Hoima stream. Behind the ravine was an immense crowd of spearmen, and their commander, Mjasi, the eldest son of Kabarega, with his standard bearer, and surrounded by his body-guards, was borne up and down the line, watching the turn affairs would take. A larger crowd on the top of Mapala Hill was similarly engaged.

A brisk fire was at once opened from both sides at a distance of about 100 yards, but from theirs with little or no effect, and this continued for some time. The Wunyoro made a better stand than could have been expected, but were slowly driven back to the edge of the ravine, which they crossed, and then, forming up on the other side, continued their firing.

Leaving one company on the edge of the ravine to keep the Wunyoro engaged, I then, making a short detour, led the remaining half company across the ford, and attacked them on the flank. This movement succeeded, and rolled up the Wunyoro, who split up into large groups, and retired into the grass towards Mapala Hill, and continued to retreat slowly, being hard pressed by us.

The other company then crossed the stream, and, moving in the direction towards which the Wunyoro were retiring, attempted to cut off their retreat. This movement, however, was only parti-

ally successful, as many of them, on perceiving it, turned and ran; but the majority remained in groups in the grass, and were turned out, group by group, by the volley firing of the soldiers. Their loss at this time was very considerable, the position of each group being afterwards shown by numbers of killed, varying from ten to thirty in each. But this did not last long, as the Wunyoro, seeing that the day was lost, gave up the struggle and fled, dividing into two bodies, the smaller of which went off to the west, whilst the main body ran towards their camp to the east, under Mapala Hill. Here, being pressed by us, they divided again; we followed them, but, on reaching the summit, they had disappeared.

The affair, from the first to the last shots, lasted about two hours; our firing was extremely wild, but not more, perhaps, than could be expected, considering the nature of the ground and the difficulty of maintaining any sort of control in the long grass, where an officer is only visible to his immediate neighbours. A very large quantity of ammunition was expended. The Wunyoro killed must have been over two hundred, and all gunsmen, as few, if any, of the spearmen took part in the action. Among the captured firearms were some rifles which were identified by deserters as the property of chiefs who had fallen. Mjasi himself had a narrow escape, being compelled to jump hurriedly from his bearer's shoulders, and to run into the long grass. The standards of

Mjasi and of Ireyta, Kabarega's commander-in-chief, were captured.

Our loss was fortunately small—only eight men wounded. In spite of my instructions, no quarter was given, though it was frequently asked for. Many pitiable scenes occurred which I could not prevent. A wounded chief asked me, as I passed, to spare his life, and I ordered the soldiers behind me to leave him ; but I soon heard a shot fired, and afterwards, on my way back, I found him dead. In the middle of the action I saw a soldier standing over a wounded Wunyoro, who was holding up his hands and asking for mercy. The soldier shot him in the stomach. Though such conduct is barbarous and quite unjustifiable, it must be remembered that the soldiers themselves are barbarians, fighting against barbarians, and were they to fall into the hands of their enemies their fate would be a similar one.

A Soudanese slave belonging to Kabarega deserted to us, and coming in after the action, had informed us that the force had left Kabarega's camp at Mashudi, near the Victoria Nile, on the 10th August ; that it was under Mjasi, Ireyta, and Rabadongo, Kabarega's prime minister ; that it had arrived at Mapala on the 25th, where it had been joined by a local levy, under Yabaswezi, whose acquaintance I had already made at Masaja Makuro. He gave me a detailed list of the chiefs and their contingents, and the whole force of guns amounted to seven hundred and fifty.

This statement was borne out by the size of the camps, which numbered over a thousand huts. The force did not consist solely of Wunyoro, for there were large contingents of Waganda malcontents, Manyamwezi foreigners and mercenaries, and of Manwegeme, and of Langas from beyond the Nile. This may account for their over confidence, and their taking the initiative in the hostilities. The Langas, however, on seeing the fort, and the clear ground around it, had deserted on the previous day.

The next day a patrol was sent out to reconnoitre the Mapala district, and they found it free from the Wunyoro, though they were told by a peasant that on the evening of the action a party had been sent back to recover the bodies of the chiefs who had fallen, and to try and find their arms. The remainder of the killed were thrown into the stream. In reporting the affair to Colonel Colvile, I expressed a hope that its result might be to convince Kabarega of the uselessness of prolonging his resistance, and that he possibly would now be willing to come to terms. I added that I had, during the last six months, visited all the outlying districts of his kingdom, and that among the Wunyoro inhabitants of those parts his misfortunes were regarded with complacency, and that among the Lurs, and other formerly subject tribes, with undisguised satisfaction; and that it was safe to say that the small amount of suffering inflicted by our occupation was, far and away, compensated for by the

relief we had afforded to his neighbours from his cruelty and oppression.

About this time our fort at the Kafu was attacked. The fort was on the summit of a steep knoll, and the forest had been cut down to afford a clear field of fire. Suddenly the Wunyoro burst from the forest, and began to swarm up the hill. The soldiers, however, were wide awake, and gave them a volley which killed fourteen of them. The remainder then turned, and went back quicker than they had come. The fort was never again attacked, but several soldiers at different times were killed when engaged in collecting food.

At Kitanwe, above the lake, the Wunyoro contented themselves with periodically raiding their fellow-countrymen who had made their submission, and on one occasion the chief was killed. Kibiro was never molested, and after a while a large number of the original inhabitants returned to work in the salt fields. Some of this salt was probably sent to Kabarega, and by that means they secured immunity.

It was now time for another cruise on the lake, especially as I had not yet established the new fort on the west shore. Owing to the resistance which Forster had met with from the inhabitants, on the occasion of his previous visit, I decided to increase the force of the proposed post to fifty rifles, and as Takenda had claimed our protection from Uma, the chief of Mahaji Kabir, which place I had fixed on as

the site of the new fort, I decided to take the opportunity of combining with its formation a punitive expedition against him. This arrangement had the advantage of being for the common good both of Takenda and of ourselves; but it necessitated an overland march through the mountainous district between the two Mahajis.

This little expedition, though it presented no difficulty, gave me a great deal of anxiety, and was the cause of my first grey hairs. Forster was away with a caravan, so to save time I started without him, leaving a note for him to follow me. I left Kafu on the 8th of October, and marched up the lake to Butiaba, and by the 11th all had been ferried over to Mahaji Saghir. I then sent the *Alexandra* back to pick up Forster, whom I expected to be at Butiaba on the 12th, waiting for her with the tools and the hoes for the formation of the new post.

I waited till the 13th, when, as the *Alexandra* had not arrived, I decided to start without her, as Forster could go in her straight on to Mahaji Kabir. I had told Takenda that I did not intend to fight his battles for him without any assistance, and that he and his tribe were to accompany me. We started at five o'clock in the morning, and the path lay by his house. He was apparently fast asleep, as were all the inhabitants of the village, so I went into the house and told him to get up. The old man got up, shook himself like a spaniel, and walked out. He was quite

pleased and ready for the march, and unwilling to waste any time in unnecessary ablutions or in breakfast. In two minutes he had collected a hundred and fifty men, who were similarly untrammelled by the necessity of making a toilet. Savage life has its advantages, and not the least of them the avoiding the necessity of spending three-quarters of an hour in washing, shaving, and putting on one's clothes. These are the real evils of life, and I have always sympathised with the disciples of Epictetus, when they went to him, and declared that they were all of them tired of tending, washing, and clothing the body, of feeding it and giving it to drink, and through it of allowing robbers, tyrants, and courts of justice to have dominion over them, and that therefore they wished to get rid of it; and I have never considered their master's objections to be quite convincing.

Takenda was unconsciously a stoic, and he trudged along with us, through the wet grass, up steep hills, and down rocky ravines, quite happily, and never wished to spare his old legs.

The first day's march was through his own country, and a very lovely country it was. We were about 3000 feet above the lake; the morning clouds lay below our feet, and the view was beautiful in its softness and in its colour, and sublime in its grandeur and the size of its features. All the same it was very difficult going, and I sorely missed my donkey. After five hours I had had enough, and

we halted in a deep valley, the sides of which were covered with bamboo, and in its bed a rocky brook.

The next day, for two hours we passed through similar country, and then we reached a broad plain-like valley, dotted with villages and cultivation. We were now in the enemy's country, and arrows were to be expected, so I prudently sent Takenda's men ahead and we walked behind them. These men had an instinct for arrows, and just before they got within reach of any, they invariably halted; then we came up, the dangerous part was pointed out, a shot fired at it and replied to by a shower of arrows, which always fell short.

Our progress was slow, as we went off to burn every village we saw, but were always anticipated by the house-holders, who themselves set fire to their houses before we arrived there. They however, to some extent, had their revenge by placing barbed arrows, stuck in the ground and pointing in our direction, along the path, which, being much overgrown, completely hid them; in this our allies' instinct failed them, and many of them were pierced. These pernicious little weapons were cunningly barbed for two or three inches, and poisoned, and they were so sharp that often the whole of the head entered the flesh, but the Lurs pulled them out and bore without flinching what to us would have been excruciating pain. We bathed in the stream in a village about a mile above Mahaji Kabir. I could see the lake,

but there was no sign of the boat, and I began to be anxious.

On the 16th, after much wandering about, I selected a site for the fort on the top of a cliff overlooking the lake, where, at its foot, was a good anchorage. We were now extremely anxious about the boat. According to my calculations, she should have arrived at Mahaji Saghir from Butiaba, which is only a few hours distant, on the evening of the 12th, but she had not arrived. Allowing that Forster, having been detained a day, had arrived there on the 13th, the *Alexandra* should have been at Mahaji Kabir waiting for us on the 14th, so she was at least two days overdue. Where could she have gone? If she had been anywhere near, she could not have failed to have seen the smoke of the villages we had burnt, or to have heard our signal volleys. I began to fear greatly that a disaster had occurred. Takenda sent his followers to steal a canoe, which I sent off at nightfall to Mahaji Saghir, to see if the boat had ever arrived there, and if necessary to go on to Butiaba and Kibiro; and in any case Takenda was to collect all his canoe~~s~~ at a place half-way between the two Mahajis, and opposite to the Butiaba promontory, so as to be able to transport our party over, if, as seemed probable, our worst fears were realised.

I passed the whole of the 17th in sitting on the cliff, and gazing over the lake in hopes that the *Alexandra* might appear. Shortly after sunset

immense torchlight processions were seen descending the hills from all directions. It seemed that a *fête* was being organised, and that they were going to serenade us; and soon indeed the serenade began, and arrows began to rain into the camp. We made no attempt to drive the enemy off by uselessly firing in the pitchy darkness, but lay down in safety under the rocks till the moon rose, when the Lurs went off to bed.

The next day, as neither the boat nor any news of her had arrived, I decided to return to Mahaji Saghir on the following morning. I had now given up all hope. The boat was certainly lost, either on its way from Mahaji to Butiaba with the Zanzibari crew, or with Forster, and some additional Zanzibari porters, between Butiaba and Mahaji. This was a great blow, for besides the loss of life involved, there was the loss of the boat, which was the apple of Colonel Colville's eye. He had frequently told me that, from a public point of view, were I to be killed or drowned, though my death would be for the time a great inconvenience, still I could be replaced in a few months; but were the boat to be wrecked, ~~the~~ loss would be irreparable, and of ~~the~~ two her life was of greater public importance than mine, and whatever I did I was to be sure that she came to no harm.

At sunset the torchlight processions were again seen, and afterwards the programme of the night before began, but at ten o'clock three volleys were heard

from the south. They could only have come from the boat, and in a moment Lurs and arrows were forgotten, fires were lighted, and every one, soldiers, Zanzibari, and our Lurs, began to dance and sing. The serenaders were taken by surprise by this demonstration, and only understanding that something untoward for themselves had happened, silently withdrew to their homes. The next morning, the 19th, contrary to expectation, the boat was not to be seen, and, though we fired some volleys, no answer was returned; but at eight o'clock the canoe returned from Mahaji, and reported that the *Alexandra* had sailed from there on the 15th. I sent some soldiers in this canoe to search the coast to the south, and at mid-day Forster and the *Alexandra* arrived.

I had passed a very uncomfortable time, but Forster's experiences had been still more disagreeable. The caravan he had gone to meet had been a day late, and another day had been lost in searching for a deserting porter at the Kafu, and he therefore had arrived at Butiaba two days late. On reaching Mahaji, he at once sailed south to the spot whence he had embarked on the previous visit; this was about two miles further south than my position. The wind had been in the wrong direction, therefore he had not heard my volleys, and the Lurs had attacked him, so that he had been obliged to hide the boat in the reeds, whence he could see nothing. He had passed the 16th, 17th, and 18th in the boat, in the

greatest discomfort. The firing we had heard was his repelling an attack, and when my canoe reached him on the 19th, he was about to set sail to return to Unyoro. The whole affair was very unfortunate, but "All's well that ends well," and Forster certainly had done his best, and was in no way to be blamed; but my grey hairs are irrevocable.

I had quite enough of Mahaji Kabir, so on the 20th I left Forster behind to construct the station, and sailed away to Unyoro. Till the Wunyoro inhabitants on the Uganda road had given Kabarega information concerning the dates of the departure of our monthly caravan, and had taken part in the attack on Forster, I had considered them to be mainly passively acquiescing in our occupation, and only prevented by the fear of the king's vexations from asking for peace. I had, therefore, never molested them; but after the hostility they had shown on that occasion, such altruism was no longer justifiable. I therefore began to despatch or lead myself a weekly raid on them, with the object of depopulating the immediate vicinity of the road, and of so rendering it safe for us. On these occasions we burnt their villages and destroyed their cultivation. We never met with much opposition, but they frequently formed ambushes, and waylaid us on our way back, and in this way we lost a few men. Though fighting with savage races who are armed with muzzle-loading muskets, in the use of which they are extremely un-

skilful, is hardly to be dignified by the name of war, and is attended with only the minimum of danger, and though on each occasion that we were engaged our losses were very small, still, as we were almost constantly engaged, when added up, they proved not inconsiderable. I found that in twelve months 4 per cent. of my force had been killed, and 6 per cent. wounded. The percentage of ten persons killed and wounded is a much higher figure than any that has recently been experienced in our frontier wars against more formidable foes.

I was now worn out, both mentally and physically, by long marches, bad food, and bad climate. I was sick of raids and bloodshed, and I longed to have done with them. Like a melancholy prisoner, when daily walking up and down in front of the fort, I would gaze at the hills toward the coast, and, as David did, would yearn for wings like a dove so that I might fly away and be at rest. I then used to think of the strangeness of fate, which so often leads us to a life the opposite of our hopes, and how, through trivial circumstances, these hopes are, one by one, left behind and remembered only as a dream. I remembered how my ambition had been to win a fellowship at college, through which I ignorantly thought I should be able to live comfortably, and do very little for £600 a year; or to be an inspector of schools, and to travel leisurely around England for rather more; or, failing these, to be a high church

parson, and to show the world a pretty taste in ritual and ornamental vestments ;* or, at any rate, to be what Cicero used to call a *bonus*—a good man who lived on his means in ease and respectability (*otium cum dignitate*). Such had been my hopes, but fate had set me down in the very furthest point from all civilisation, as a captain of Bashi-bazouks, a raider, and an ivory thief. But to be even such with credit, a large amount of energy is indispensable ; my stock of it had always been small, and now it was quite exhausted, so I applied to Colonel Colville to relieve me ; but there were yet a few more months to pass.

Moffat, who had been nearly five years in Africa, and who had suffered from almost continued fever, had recently been compelled, to the great regret of us all, to go home, so our little community was reduced to Forster and myself.

Early in November a new company had arrived to relieve one of those stationed at Hoima. There were, therefore, for the time being, 300 soldiers in the fort. It then occurred to me that 50 men were quite sufficient to guard it from attack, and 250 were quite able to more than hold their own against Kabarega, and that I ought to go and stir him up, more especially as Colonel Colville had instructed me, were I fortunate enough to inflict a crushing defeat on Kabarega, to endeavour to communicate with him, with a view of bringing him to terms. Such a defeat had not as yet taken place. On the other hand, I had

received no positive orders to attack him; he was about 80 miles away, and unless my movements were a complete surprise they could not succeed, and to surprise him appeared almost impossible; and lastly, to attempt to do so involved a great deal of fatigue, and I was extremely lazy. I thought it all over, and at last I reluctantly decided to go.

The greatest secrecy was necessary, for news travelled very quickly, and I knew that Kabarega was kept well informed of everything that happened at Hoima. The Soudanese deserter from Kabarega had been a slave in his house, and knew the way to where he was now; and besides him I had, bottled up in the guard-room, a Wunyoro chief whom I had captured, and whom I had kept to be useful in such a contingency. Provided that our departure was unexpected, I had no fear of meeting any opposition for the first few days, but it could hardly be expected that Kabarega would not receive information of our approach, or that he would stay himself to meet us.

On the 8th November I marched out with 250 soldiers, the irregulars, the Waganda Muslims, and our two guides. We marched 23 miles, and reached Kebuguzi without any opposition. The next day we went 20 miles through a fertile district that was populated, and we were much delayed by advance guard skirmishes. This day we lost our Wunyoro guide. He had been walking along quite contentedly, smoking his pipe and talking to his guard, and I had promised to release

him on our return ; but after we had gone a few miles he became extremely restless, and soon began to mutter and to show signs of insanity. He was passing his old home ; the *Cacitus soli* was a passion with him that amounted to a mania. He threw himself upon the ground, kicked and jerked like a lunatic, and refused to go on. He was first coaxed and then warned, but all was useless. We had lost half an hour, and if we were to succeed, every minute was precious. If I had released him he would have run off and warned his master. The circumstances of the expedition precluded our carrying him, and to leave him tied alone in a country infested with wild animals would have only added refined cruelty to certain eventual death. Only one course remained : I gave the necessary orders. A few minutes after the death of our guide, I saw a movement in the grass ; some Waganda who were close to me, uttered a short cry of excitement and were off in a minute. I then perceived that they were hunting a Wunyoro ; the chase was short, and soon I saw him fall. I followed them up, and found that four of them had pinned him to the ground with their spears by the two arms and the thigh, and some more were stabbing him through and through. The poor wretch was still writhing when I came up, but too late to save him, for he died immediately afterwards. I was much struck with the faces of the Waganda whilst they were performing this butchery. They were cheerful without being excited, and had the air of satisfaction which one

would attribute to an honest Chicago workman when he had slaughtered the last ox of his daily task.

We had lost the main path, and the swamps were all unbridged, so it was nearly sunset when we camped in a village on the border of the forest belt which separated us from Mashudi. This belt is about 35 miles broad, and is nearly uninhabited. If I could pass through it quickly without being observed, I hoped that I might reach Kabarega at the same time as the news of our approach, which had doubtless been sent on to him from where we were. Kabarega would probably assume that we would take two days to cover the distance, and might possibly wait where he was till I was one day's march distant, so I determined to do the whole distance in one day. The prospect was not very encouraging; we were in the last weeks of the rainy season, it had hitherto been raining in torrents daily, and the path before us was little used, much overgrown, and very swampy, and the swamps would now be at their worst, and our progress consequently very slow.

We started the next morning in the dark, and were soon in the forest. The road and swamps surpassed even my fears, and it was seven o'clock in the evening before we reached an open glade, where I decided to halt. We had marched fourteen hours, and had covered but little more than 20 miles, but we had seen no one on the road, so there was still a hope of success. It had rained incessantly

all day long, and we were wet through, cold, and tired; a short rest for food and fire was absolutely necessary. I swallowed a biscuit and a little brandy, and then, after giving orders that I was to be awakened at nine o'clock, I lay down by the fire, took a little syringe from my pocket, and injected under my skin a dose of morphia; and very soon I had in my dreams travelled to those "far off Elysian fields where dwells Rhadamanthus with the golden hair, where life is ever sweet, where sorrow is not, nor winter, nor any rain or storm, and the never-dying zephyrs blow soft and cool from off the ocean."

But I was only allowed to taste the joys of Elysium for a very short while, for soon I felt my servant tugging at my foot, and I had to rise, for it was now nine o'clock, and they were all ready to start and were waiting for me. The rain had stopped, the clouds had rolled away, and the moon was shining brightly, so, somewhat refreshed and cheered, we proceeded on our way. The road, however, was no better, and the swamps were cold and depressing, and we had still nearly 15 miles to trudge. After about five miles we came to a deep and narrow river, the Titi, which, owing to the rains, was now in flood; the current was strong, and the water up to one's neck. The sight of it made me shudder, but *ce n'est que le premier pas qui coute*, so in we jumped; being already wet through it did not much

matter, and the reality was less bad than the expectation. The land now began to rise, there were no more swamps, and the road was clearer, and we pushed on fast.

At about one in the morning we came to a small village, so the greatest caution was necessary. But within a yard of the road there was a house, and coming up to it I could see that the door was open, that inside was a blazing fire, and that three men were sitting around it, and were smoking.

It was impossible that we could pass without being discovered, so I stopped, and turning round, made a sign to the soldiers. As I did so, one of the men got up and went towards the door. But the soldiers had understood me well, they had fixed their bayonets. In a moment a dozen of them had run into the house and silently done their work.

This transaction, I know, comes very near to mere assassination. Up to nearly the end of the seventeenth century, assassination was a recognised method of European diplomacy, and in Africa, both in diplomacy and warfare, it still survives as such. The circumstances of this case, in particular, compelled, if they did not justify, its employment. In a forced night march when silence and speed are essential, I could not be encumbered with prisoners, who would make a noise and try to escape, and the event showed that I had acted wisely, for these were the special messengers who had been sent in front

of us to warn Kabarega of our approach. They had been resting where we had killed them, and at daybreak they would have gone on to Mashudi, warned him, and thus entailed a far greater loss of life.

I discovered another man hidden in a corner of the house, so we pulled him out, and promptly tied a knot round his neck. He would serve us as a guide to Kabarega's house. At half-past two we came to another village, but we passed through it without disturbing the sleepers. The moon was sinking low in the horizon, the sky was beginning to cloud over, and it was rapidly getting very dark. At three o'clock we had reached the outskirts of Kabarega's town. The Soudanese guide was now overcome with fear; he lost his head, and could not remember where Kabarega's house was. I then had recourse to the captive Wunyoro, but the moment he was spoken to he opened his mouth and began the long warning shriek of alarm I knew so well; but scarcely had he begun it when the rope was tightened from behind, and the shriek was abruptly silenced. Fortunately he had ~~not~~ been heard, and the Wunyoro were still fast asleep. For a few minutes we crept silently among the houses, • searching for that of Kabarega, with the hope of surrounding it and taking him alive. But soon the watch-dogs began to bark and the cattle to low, and some one came out to see what was the matter; he

saw us and fired. In a minute we were surrounded by a horde of Wunyoro, firing wildly in the dark, and shrieking to their women to run. But we hustled them through at the double, and in ten minutes all was over.

Kabarega had fled, leaving behind him his clothing, his cattle, his ammunition, his ivory, cloth, and household goods, and the superstitiously venerated insignia of his office. Shortly afterwards a fire broke out, probably started by the irregulars, and his powder magazine and ammunition store exploded; half the large and straggling town was burnt, and probably much valuable property destroyed, but over three hundred head of cattle, a large quantity of cloth, ivory, beads, shells, and all his household goods fell into our hands. Had it been a bright night, there can be little doubt but that we should have taken him alive, and I was much disappointed at having failed to do so; but the fault was not mine, and, on the whole, we had been fairly fortunate. My thoughtful boy brought me some cocoa and biscuits; nothing more could be done, so I went to sleep till the dawn broke.

In the morning we made a camp outside the town, collected cattle and loot, and I sent out a reconnoitring patrol to drive in those which had strayed. We made no attempt to pursue, as we were tired and the Wunyoro were fresh, and Kabarega, who was the only person I wanted to catch, would by that time have been across the Nile and far away.

Although Kabarega had not suffered a crushing defeat, still his nerves had been probably much upset, and I therefore thought that, having regard to Colonel Colville's instructions, I might endeavour to communicate with him; so I wrote a letter in Arabic, inviting him to become "an obedient British subject," in which case he would always live happily, etc., etc. This letter I stuck on a stick in the middle of his yard, and left it. This letter was promptly repudiated by the Foreign Office, but it caused a certain amount of unnecessary fussing on the part of some Radical members in a debate on Uganda, and a certain Mr Byles said that every one who had in any way been connected with that country, might be thoroughly ashamed of himself. If so, I much fear that, if the good man pays me the honour of reading this book, he will find no reason for changing his opinion—at any rate, of myself. As a matter of fact, Kabarega never had an opportunity of receiving my elegant Arabic composition, and even if he had done so, he would not have understood it. It was either fearfully cremated by the superstitious Wunyoro as a piece of horrid witchcraft, or more probably greedily devoured by a hungry goat.

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We stayed one whole day at Mashudi. I knew that the journey back would be very different from what we had hitherto experienced, and that the greater part of our difficulties lay in front of us. We should now be a long column, with our porters, cattle, goats,

and prisoners carrying ivory. I should have to make slow and short marches, and ambushes would have been organised and ready waiting for us.

On the first day we returned to the glade in the forest where we had rested; several of the goats and cattle were drowned in crossing the Titi. The ambushes had already begun, and one man was killed. The second day's march was through the forest. I had not expected any ambushes there, but we found them all the same, and one man was killed and two wounded. Owing to the swamps, the cattle and the rear-guard did not get into camp till half-past nine at night. Some of the calves and goats had been drowned, and many others had died of fatigue.

The next day we made only a very short march of six miles, and camped at Ireyta's village. This day no one was hurt, although the ambushes for us were laid as usual. These constant ambushes are very trying to one's nerves, for it is impossible to foresee them; they may be anywhere, and we had always to be on the tip-top of expectation. I always found that when we had passed over a swamp and reached the tall grass on the far side there was almost invariably one waiting for us. I used then to fire a few shots as feelers, before crossing the swamp; if these shots were followed by any movements of the grass, there was an ambush inside, and a volley then turned it out. I stayed at Ireyta's house a whole day, and sent a raiding party

to devastate the country, in the faint hope that the delay might secure us an immunity for the next march.

On the 17th, we covered ten miles. There were three or four ambushes, but most of them were anticipated. The Wunyoro were always vigorously pursued, and they seldom got off without some loss.

On the 18th, we had a comparatively quiet march, as all the ambushes were laid in the swamps, and we had found out how to meet them. The prisoners had given a lot of trouble, and were always trying to escape. They had been promised to be released on their arrival at Hoima, but still they continued to run away. On the previous day there had been an organised attempt, and they all simultaneously bolted; one or two were shot down, the others were recaptured.

The 19th, as far as the advanced guard were concerned, was a succession of ambushes, and they were of a new and particularly irritating description. The path lay through long elephant grass, about 14 feet high, and at points where it was thickest, the grass had been bent over and tied together to make a barricade. To avoid this, it was necessary either to untie it or to make a detour round it. If one chose the former, we were shot at during the operation; if the latter, we went straight into the ambushade. One soldier was killed and two severely wounded,



IREYTA'S HOUSE IN MASINDI.

and just before we got into camp a volley was fired at us, and I felt a stinging sensation over my heart. I put my hand inside my shirt and pulled it out covered with blood. I then remembered how, on parade in Egypt, a soldier who was carrying his rifle over his shoulder, with a bayonet fixed, had stumbled and fallen, and how a sergeant who was behind him, fully two minutes afterwards had dropped down dead, and that it was found that the soldier's bayonet had pricked the sergeant's heart; so there was no time to lose. I ran after my man in a moment. He had to push his way through the grass; I could follow in his tracks, and in two seconds I was on him, and felled him with the butt end of my revolver. As a matter of fact, all this exertion was very unnecessary, for the bullet had been fired at me sideways, and it had passed through one side of my breast pocket and out of the other, and had only cut the skin.

The next day a short and quiet march brought us in to Hoima. Throughout this incursion, the behaviour of the Soudanese officers and men was all that could be wished, and the cheerful way in which they underwent great fatigues and considerable hardships is deserving of the highest praise.

In December I paid another visit to Mahaji Kabir, and found it necessary to lead another raid against Uma. On all these occasions I had left the captain of the Zanzibari crew behind, to take care

of the boat, partly because it was his business to do so, and partly because I, very unjustly, disliked him. He was really an excellent and trustworthy person, but in appearance was very unprepossessing, as he was a big burly African, like a stoker on an Indian mail-ship. Apparently his feelings were hurt, for he came and begged to be allowed to accompany me. I consented reluctantly, and was rather amused afterwards to find that he was the only man wounded that day. He had received an arrow through his thigh, and though I told him he would die unless he had it sucked, he pooh-poohed my suggestion. He rapidly became very ill, and I thought he would have died, but ultimately he recovered and accompanied me back to Mombasa.

This was my last raid. I had captured at Mashudi two brass spears and a brass tripod. These, according to Amara, were the regalia of Kabarega, and had been specially consecrated with all manner of witchcraft, and were so superstitiously venerated that Kabarega, in order to recover them, would make his submission.

I had at once sent them to Colonel Colville, as an addition to his collection of curiosities, and also to prevent their being stolen, and being sent back to their owner. That such a superstition should really carry any weight appeared grotesque, but apparently such was the case; for ten days after my return Kabarega sent an ambassador to ask for

peace. I granted a truce for four months, pending negotiations as to terms. Colonel Colvile wrote to me very kindly, saying he would send Cunningham (my old friend and commanding officer in Egypt) to relieve me, and that on his arrival I might start for home.

Early in January 1895 Cunningham arrived. He told me that Colonel Colvile was very dangerously ill, and was about to be carried back to the coast, accompanied by Doctor Ansorge, who took a very serious view of his case. This was bad news, and I, in common with all the others, was very sorry. Colonel Colvile's courage and pertinacity were remarkable. He had always suffered greatly from fever, but when other people would have taken to their beds, he would continue to march and to work, and to be as cheerful and agreeable as ever. On the day when Ansorge was every moment expecting him to die, he wrote me the most amusing of the many amusing letters I had received from him. Of his talents it would be unbecoming in me to speak; but he possessed the confidence of all his subordinates. His influence over Mwanga was peculiar. I do not think he ever saw him more than half a dozen times, and whenever he did so he was, as usual, always quiet and polite; but poor Mwanga used to tremble in his presence. In the same way he maintained order among all the rival sects in Uganda. To myself and other officers in distant parts he gave an outline of

the course he wished us to pursue ; the details and methods he left to ourselves, and he judged only by the results. It was to his good offices and, I must honestly confess, his unduly high estimate of my services and the difficulties I had to encounter, that on my return I was more than sufficiently rewarded for the slight amount of discomfort and fatigue I had undergone. He was carried in a hammock all the way to the coast, where he was met by Lady Colville, who was about to face the dangers and hardships of an eight-hundred mile tramp to join her husband.

I reached Mombasa towards the end of March. Four of us had originally started thence, and I was the last to return, and the only one who did so in health and strength.

On the 27th of April I was in England again, and I intended to stay there. "*Inveni portum : spes et fortuna valete. Sat me lusistis : ludite nunc alios.*" But the next day I began to think that the advantages of a residence in England were perhaps somewhat over-rated. The climate was vile, the natives were yahoos, dirty in their persons, and rude in their manners ; their restrictions I found tedious, their conventionalities artificial and insufferable, and I then wrote to the Foreign Office to say that, should my services ever be again required in Africa, I should be much honoured in placing them at its disposal.

In these pages, I fear that I have written a great deal too much about myself, and a great deal too little about my friends, and about the soldiers whom I was fortunate enough to command. These were negroid Soudanese—troops who had served under Baker and Gordon, and who had remained in the country after Emin Pasha's abdication of his duties. Possibly they are not heroes—heroes are not required; but in endurance, subordination, patience, and cheerfulness, they are a model to be admired and imitated by every army in the world. They would march 20 miles a day, or more, through long tangled grass reaching over their heads, through swamps and jungles, and at the end go foraging, sometimes for many miles, to fetch food. Crime and punishment were almost unknown; they worked at parade, at agriculture, or at house-building, from sunrise to sunset, and they did so cheerfully and well for their monthly payment of some 4s. worth of white calico.

Of my comrades, few have been as fortunate as myself. Some have died, others have been invalided, and others, like Forster, my friend and colleague in Unyoro, in bad health, with small emoluments, or hope of official advancement, are now doing good work and cheerfully risking their lives in performing their duty for love of it. But they have not worked in vain; to them are addressed the magnificent words of Carlyle—the words of one of the glories of the

world : " My friends, all speed ! what you do faithfully, that is ETERNAL. Let all the rest of it go prating."

" Eyes do regard you
In Eternity's stillness
Here is all fulness
Ye brave, to reward you
Work and despise not."—GOETHE.

PART IV.—DONGOLA

INTRODUCTION TO PART IV.

MAJOR THRUSTON reached England on his return from Uganda at the end of May 1895. His health had suffered more than he confesses in the narrative. Perfect rest was enjoined by the doctors, but that was a remedy that he found it difficult to adopt. At the end of his leave he left for India to join the 2nd battalion of his regiment at Bareilly in the North-West Provinces.

The life in an Indian cantonment did not appeal to Thruston, though it was varied by a run to visit some of the places of most interest in Oude and in the North-West Provinces, and also by a stay at Ranikhat in the magnificent scenery of the Himalayas; but the spell of Africa was on him, and he was restless. Very welcome, therefore, was the telegram he received at Rhanikhat on 16th April 1896, calling him to Egypt, to share with his old friends and comrades in its ~~aim~~ the discomforts, hardships, and dangers of the Expedition to Dongola.

The story of this expedition has been often told,

but some of the "Experiences" are of the things that have not been told. Thruston's situation, when, on the west bank of the Nile, he with only 150 Arab irregulars was confronted by the whole Dervish army, whilst the Egyptian forces remained, unaware that the Dervishes had crossed the river, on the east bank, was one that, it seemed, must have infallibly led to the annihilation of his little force. His ready tact, cool courage and determination enabled him, however, to bluff the Dervishes, inform the Egyptian staff of their movements, and preserve his own men.

General, now Sir, A. Hunter, K.C.B., D.S.O., had applied for Thruston to be on his staff. The application was refused, or, at any rate, the appointment not made, and Thruston was consequently disappointed of congenial work under his old chief; and, besides, lost the Brevet Lieutenant-Colonelcy which at the end of the campaign was conferred on those who held that and the like appointments. None the less cheerfully he did his less agreeable duties on the line of communication in the cholera camp, and with what he in fun used to call his "scallywags." After the occupation of Dongola his service as special service officer ended, and he for the last time left Africa for England.

CHAPTER VII

THE EXPEDITION TO DONGOLA

Sea Studies—Gossip—Arrival at the Front—Cavalry affair of the 1st of May—The Night March—Action at Firkeh—Pursuit to Suarda—Dervish Rule—The Return to Akasha.

AS I have already shown, I had patiently served a rather dull apprenticeship for nearly four years in Egypt, and had gone rather impatiently to try and find better luck in another part of Africa, and strange to say, had found it; and now, in April 1896, a still stranger event, and one that cannot be expected to happen more than once in a lifetime, occurred, for I found that both my patience and impatience had attained their reward, and I was on my way to take part in the expedition to Dongola.

If we are to take literally what is written in a well-known liturgy, a hope can be, under certain circumstances, described as sure and certain; more especially then when it is concerned with a matter of inmanent knowledge, and when it coincides with what one considers ~~is~~ to be exactly fit and proper, it is not difficult to persuade oneself of its certainty.

I sailed away feeling very confident that the part I

was about to play was to be no unimportant one, and that all the ambitions and aspirations of my relations were quite sure to be fulfilled. It is to be wished, however, that the good archbishop's pious paradox has been generally better fulfilled by the event than was the little worldly one of my own; for the part I actually played was a poor little thing, and only now and then could I get a glimpse from behind the scenes to see the chief actors come and go; so that now all that I can do is to repeat my lines again, and, like the provincial actor, make the most of a small part.

I have always thought it well to try to make, at any rate, a pleasant beginning to an enterprise, for the ending of it is on the knees of the gods; and as the beginning of this enterprise was a sea voyage, and as, granted fair weather, the pleasure of such rests with one's company, the ensuring of congenial society was my first care, for a crowd is not company, and "faces are but a gallery of pictures, and talk is but a tinkling cymbal where there is no love." Though by comparison he may be very young, and have travelled very little, and have seen but few men and cities, still on any Ulysses of the nineteenth century even the fair society, that ordinarily transforms a mail boat into a palace of delight, is apt to pall.

• Fortunately, substitutes more congenial, more sympathetic and more satisfying can, especially at sea, be found in nature and in books. In April, in the Indian ocean, nature is bountifully present and

beautiful, but the books depended on myself. Baggage being limited, and leisure unlimited, these books had to be such as could always be taken up with a moderate amount of pleasure, and be dropped without the smallest regret, and be capable, too, of being so treated over and over again. Their authors have been long dead, and I refrain from pandering to the vanity of their manes by disclosing their names to the reader. Some readers, perhaps, may take the hint, and profit by it in the future. Those I chose suited my purpose admirably, and well stuffed with them, I reached Suez on the 3rd of April, and proceeded to Cairo. There I found that the sole topic of conversation was the expedition, its causes, its plans, and its chances of success without the aid of an English force. Those who knew anything were unwilling to share their knowledge with any one else; such always confined themselves to the safe prophecy that the weather would be hotter on the Upper Nile than at Cairo. But, in spite of this reticence, there were many canards flying about, and the owner of each was very confident that his own was the only true bird.

I collected them all together, and by comparison, and by eliminating what was contradictory, I arrived at the following, of which probably not a word was true, but it will serve as an example of journalistic methods:—

It would appear that Cabinet secrets are not

always kept (Ministers are usually married). A Cabinet council was being held in London, when the Italian Ambassador sent an earnest request for a conversation with the Prime Minister. He informed him that General Baratieri had met with a terrible reverse at Adowa, and he implored him to make a diversion in their favour from the Nile. His message was communicated to the Cabinet, and the duty of friendly action on our part was immediately recognised, and one of the Ministers suggested that it was a good opportunity of retaking Dongola. To do something was agreed on, but the first decision was only to advance immediately as far as Akasha, the former terminus of the railway that had been built by Lord Wolseley. A young captain in the War Office Intelligence Department, who was afterwards sent for by the Prime Minister, so clearly stated his case, that he convinced the Minister that, on every ground, no such favourable opportunity for commencing the reconquest of the Soudan would ever be presented in the future. Military experts were then consulted as to the military possibilities of the scheme, and the necessary instructions were accordingly sent to Egypt. The first public information as to the advance was a telegram in the *Times*, purporting to have arrived from their Cairo correspondent; but as a matter of fact, no such telegram was ever sent, but the official *communiqué* was disguised in that form. The first news received in Cairo was a telegram from Lord

Lansdowne to General Knowles, who commanded there. Lord Cromer, on receipt of the news, at once gave his opinion that any advance that fell short of Dongola would be mere waste of money. This settled the question, and the conquest of Dongola was decided upon. Expeditions cannot be undertaken without money, so it was necessary for the Egyptian Government to provide it, which it did by advancing half a million pounds from the reserve fund. France and Russia immediately protested and laid an action. But this troubled no one, for if, as it was to be expected, they gained their action, the decision could be appealed against, and the law's delay has some advantages, for by the time the appeal could be heard, the expedition would be over, and the money spent. This expectation proved correct; the Egyptian Government in the end lost their case, and an appeal was laid. This appeal had to be tried by a not very august tribunal called the "mixed" one—that is to say, it consisted of judges of the various powers sitting with those of Egypt.

When the trial came on, two months after the conclusion of the expedition, the court consisted of a Russian, French, German, Greek, and two Egyptian members. The German and the two Egyptians could, without any further inducement, be relied upon to vote for England; and similarly the Russian and the Frenchman to do so against her: so the Greek, who had no political predilections, was the arbiter of the

situation. If Cairo gossip is to be trusted, this Greek gentleman was given to understand that if he voted on the Anglo-Egyptian side he would never regret it, but an immediate cause was given him to vote for France, which he consequently did. The votes were therefore equal, but according to the rule in such contingencies, the judgment went with the side which carried most European votes, so France won the day.

The half million was really insufficient for the purpose, and although by extraordinary good management and economy very little more than it was spent, the enforced economy entailed considerable hardship on the soldiers. It has always been the custom to grant working pay to soldiers when they are employed in an extraordinary labour. All the Egyptian soldiers were employed as navvies in railway construction; they worked from sunrise to sunset, and did much better than any navvies would have done, and owing to their wonderful physique, in spite of the intense heat and the scarcity of water, they were none the worse for it. An Egyptian never complains, but we all felt that he was owed something more than his ordinary daily pay of one piastre (2½d.). This is the only criticism that can be made on an expedition • which presented so many and often great difficulties, not so much from a military point of view, as from that of overcoming obstacles of nature, difficult communications, a distant base, deserts, cataracts, cholera,

contrary winds, and destructive rains. The criticism, moreover, cannot be applied to its commander, nor to the Egyptian Government. No more money was to be obtained, and the object ordered had to be attained, and it is greatly to their credit that they effected it with so much success.

I reported myself to the Commandant of the Base, and was ordered to provide myself with two horses, two camels, camp equipment, servants, and everything that was necessary. I had, fortunately, been able through my economies in Unyoro to amass a little money, out of which there still remained rather over £100. So with this sum, aided by a generous advance of three days' pay of 15s. a day, obtained from the Egyptian treasury, I was enabled to complete my purchases, and after a few days started up the river to Wady Halfa.

On my arrival there, Sir H. Kitchener, the general in command of the expedition, received me very kindly, and I had the opportunity of thanking him for my appointment. I was posted to the Camel Corps, and was informed that as I was a Special Service officer and not the possessor of an Egyptian commission, I could not command troops, but I was to consider myself the staff officer of the Camel Corps.

I left Halfa the next day, and, after two days' journey, by train and by camel, joined my corps at Ambigol, a camp on the Nile about 60 miles south of Halfa. My commanding officer, Major Tudway, said

there were no staff duties for me to perform, so he put me in command of two of his companies.

There had already been an encounter with the Dervishes. It was a cavalry action, and an insignificant one, but as the accounts of it as supplied by some of the newspaper correspondents have been extremely inaccurate, and as the improbability of their stories has led people to believe the opposite of what they told, I think it well to repeat the story as it was related to me by Major Burn-Murdoch, who was in command of the cavalry that was engaged. On the 1st May, the Sirdar had arrived at Akasha to inspect our advanced post. At about eight o'clock in the morning some Arab scouts who were employed by the Intelligence Department came in and reported that they had been surprised a few miles away by a number of Dervishes, and that one of their party had been killed.

Major Burn-Murdoch was therefore sent out with three squadrons, to reconnoitre and to intercept the Dervishes on their return journey. Murdoch went out and soon came upon their tracks, but found that instead of a small party of camel men in front of him there were about 300 cavalry, a horde of camel men, with a large number of infantry massed behind them. He then, very properly, decided to fall back, as the half battalion of infantry which had been sent after him from Akasha had not arrived. This retirement was executed in the manner prescribed in the cavalry

drill book, that is to say, a troop or a squadron, I forget which, covered the retreat in extended order. The Dervish cavalry, on seeing this retreat, went after the Egyptians, and a few of them who were bolder than the rest rode right into their ranks, and were promptly killed. Murdoch, finding the Dervishes were retreating, sounded the halt. He dismounted his men and fired a few volleys after the enemy, and the affair was over.

The Dervish loss was 14 killed and a proportionate number wounded. The Egyptian loss was one killed, and, I think, a few wounded, and one man afterwards died.

Captain Broadwood of the 12th Lancers, who was making an "officer's reconnaissance," had, in the morning, seen the Dervish force parading for the attack, and had counted them as he watched them through his telescope from a hill on the other side of the river, and they numbered 1500. Why they retired tamely before 200 Egyptian cavalry is not easily understood, especially as the half battalion of infantry had not come into sight.

The patient person who wishes to follow the thread of this story of the Dongola campaign must have some knowledge of Nile geography. From Cairo to Assouan (a distance of about 550 miles) the river is navigable throughout; at Assouan is the first cataract, which is passed by a railway; then, from Shellal, the head of the cataract, to Wády Halfa

(another 200 miles), the Nile is again navigable. At Wady Halfa is the second cataract, which is really a series of cataracts extending for over 100 miles as far as Firkeh, and the country through which the river there passes is called Batan-ul-Hajar, the Belly of Stones, and it presents a picture of unrivalled desolation, a dreary wilderness of mountains and rock, unrelieved by an acre of flat ground or of fertility.

Akasha, our furthest post, was 16 miles from that of the Dervishes at Firkeh, which is at the end of the Batan-ul-Hajar, and at the opening of the navigable water. From Firkeh to Merawi (a distance of nearly 350 miles) the river is navigable when the Nile is high, that is to say, from the beginning of August to the middle of October, but, for the remainder of the year portages are necessary at Kajbar (90 miles from Firkeh) and at Hannek (40 miles from Kajbar). At Merawi another Batan-ul-Hajar begins, and extends for about 140 miles, as far as Abu Hamad. From Abu Hamad, at high and middle Nile the river is navigable to Khartoum, and thence all the year round as far as the Albert Nyanza, with the exception of the cataract at Lado, situated near the fourth degree of latitude. Khartoum is on the sixteenth degree. Merawi is now (1897) the Egyptian frontier, and the railway has been extended to above the Hannek cataract, so communication is now uninterrupted from Cairo to the frontier, a distance of about 1300 miles.

To resume the story. I reached Ambigol on 11th May. There I met my old chief, Colonel Hunter, and learned from him the state of affairs. There was a brigade at Akasha which was watching, and was being watched by, the Dervishes, who were at Firkeh. The rest of our army was distributed along the river and the railway line between Akasha and Halfa. An advance would be made as soon as the railway had been extended to Ambigol, and a sufficient reserve of supplies had been collected at Akasha. To effect this was necessarily a slow business, as, owing to the lowness of the river, nearly all the transport had to be conducted by camels, and the country being a desert, the camels ate nearly as much as they carried. In a desert the Egyptian camel, though indispensable, is a very much over-rated animal. He can carry about 350 lbs., but requires 12 lbs. of grain daily for forage, so he would eat his load in twenty-nine days. He is also very delicate, and cannot stand heat nor change of climate, and as most of ours were imported from middle Egypt, their mortality was very great. Caravans daily worked between the different posts, carrying supplies to the front. They were guarded by an escort of cavalry, but as the length of each caravan was nearly two miles, they were practically at the mercy of the Dervishes, who, however, as if under some spell, remained apathetic and inert, and never made any attempt to interfere

with them. This want of energy on the part of the Dervishes led nearly all of us to entertain a very low opinion of their worth, and we thought that the expedition would prove a mere promenade. This opinion was not shared, however, by the Sirdar and Colonel Hunter, and when the time for the advance came, they made such careful and certain preparations as to render defeat almost inconceivable. The railway construction parties, who were stout young fellaheen especially enlisted for the work, and styled the Railway Battalion, were supported by a battalion of infantry. Later on, when the railway had reached the end of Lord Wolseley's old "formation level," nearly all the Egyptian battalions were employed in its extension. The flank of the line was guarded by a desert screen of Arab irregulars. These men, though entirely useless as a "line of resistance," were excellent danger barometers, and therefore useful as a "line of observation."

We were very comfortable at Ambigol, having nothing to do except to rest our camels and to heal their sore backs. We lived in small grass huts, the river flowed within a foot of our doors, and we had but to step out to be in our baths. The water was clear and limpid, though when the Nile is high it is red and muddy. The temperature was very high, nearly always reaching 120° Fahr. In the afternoon, but the air was so dry and bracing that

we felt no discomfort, except from the dust and the flies which swarmed in myriads. The latter were probably caused by the large number of dead camels, which made us practically prisoners in the camp, for to ride along the road was impossible from their frequency and horrible stench.

By 1st June everything was nearly ready; the Sirdar arrived, and the concentration began, and on 3rd June the Camel Corps marched out as an escort to the Horse Artillery, and we reached Akasha. Horse Artillery theoretically can go anywhere, but in practice the Batan-ul-Hajar is an exception, so we had to make a detour out into the desert beyond the hills. This involved a march of 30 miles. It blew a dust storm all day, and the horses must have suffered considerably, but they were all well-bred Syrian arabs, and I think that only three of them died. Now, when I am looking back upon them, the next three days seem to have been the most uncomfortable that I have ever spent, but at the time we naturally took everything as a matter of course, and were quite merry.

• The dust storm blew day and night without intermission. We had no tents, nor huts, and we sat on the sand, trying to dodge the sun round a shadowless tamarisk tree; we bathed in the river, and five minutes afterwards we were incased in a thick crust of dirt and dust. The transport camp surrounded us, and the stench of the live and dead animals further added to

the amenities of the situation. We sat and waited as troops continued to arrive, and at last the order to advance was given.

At half-past three on the afternoon of the 6th, the Infantry Division, under General Hunter, consisting of three brigades, in all nine battalions, accompanied by two mountain batteries and a division of a Maxim battery, the whole under General Kitchener, started on their march to Firkeh. This force was to make a front attack on the Dervish position, just before daybreak on the seventh.

At six o'clock on the evening of the 6th, the Mounted Corps, consisting of seven squadrons of cavalry, six companies of the Camel Corps, a Horse Battery, two divisions of a Maxim battery, and a battalion of camels, made their *rendezvous* outside Akasha. This force, under Major Burn-Murdoch, was to make a detour into the desert, and to attack the Dervishes in the rear simultaneously with the front attack.

All-night marches are much alike, are always very dangerous and usually unsuccessful, and, but for the important matter of success, this one was no exception to the rule. Its monotony was only relieved by losing the way, finding it again, stumbling on one another, trying to keep awake, falling asleep, and waking up to find oneself tumbled from one's camel and lying on the ground. All these things we did in abundance, but such pleasantries had been foreseen, and an ample

time allowance had been made for them; so just before dawn we found ourselves on a hill looking over the Dervish camp—a large village of squalid mud hovels and of grass huts. Not a sound was to be heard, and no one was to be seen.

“It seemed as if the very palm-trees were asleep.”

We waited for perhaps two minutes, then we heard the first rattle of distant musketry: the Dervish outposts had discovered the front attack. In an instant the camp was alive again. Like a swarm of ants the Dervishes streamed from their huts. Banners flew, spears glistened, and horses neighed, the rattle of musketry grew loud and nearer. We thundered down the hill, and ranged up opposite the camp. Flight was impossible for them—they had either to win or die. They were three thousand and we were nearly three times as many, so to win was impossible.

A company officer is necessarily unable to give a general description of an action. He is busy with his company, and he has no time to look about him, and the smoke and dust prevent his seeing far. Tudway gave me a company; I saw the Dervishes in front of me, and we went towards them, and as we went, we stopped and fired a volley at each rush. Three or four of us dropped on the way, and then we got behind a rock at a distance of about 200 yards from the Dervishes, who were behind another rock. Here we stopped, as we could go no further. Some Dervish

cavalry appeared from behind their rock, and charged in groups of twos and threes, and were at once shot down at our rifles' mouths. When one group fell, another would appear from behind the rock, and would wave their spears, and shouting their war-cry, "Fi sabil Illahi!" would charge again and fall.

I then saw there was another rock close by, and only about 150 yards from their position, and that if I could get behind it, I could easily enfilade them. I told the soldiers to wait for my whistle, and then to follow me. I blew my whistle, and then I ran like a hare, but another group had charged; this had diverted their attention, and, in the noise of firing, my whistle had not been heard, for on looking round I found no one behind me, so I had to run the gauntlet back again.

Immediately afterwards I was joined by Captain Green-Wilkinson, of the Rifle Brigade, and his company. We then made another attempt, and this time we reached our rock. The Dervishes retired to another, and we took their place, and a very uncomfortable place it was, for we found that, except at one spot, we were exposed both to the fire of the Dervishes from two directions and to that of our own front attack. For some minutes we had to huddle together, and Green-Wilkinson, in peeping round the corner, got the tip of his nose carried away. But soon we heard the peculiar patter of the Maxim

gun, and we saw Major Lawrie, R.A., handling his battery in a most masterly manner. He despised all cover, and he was ubiquitous in "action front." Rattle, rattle, rattle, rattle, "limber up," "gallop," "action front," and again the rattle, rattle, rattle.

The Dervishes retired from their rock, and Wilkinson and I took their place. We could now see the front attack quite close to us. The Dervishes were trying to save themselves; they tried to get round by the desert, but were met by the horse battery and Major Townshend's battalion; they then tried the river bank, but were stopped by the cavalry and the Camel Corps. They had fought bravely for an hour and a half, but when ammunition is exhausted the rifle is of no avail, and spears, however bravely wielded, cannot withstand the volley. Their losses at this time were very great, and the few who escaped did so by plunging into the river.

The action was over, and Wilkinson and I collected our two companies. They were wild with excitement, and when we moved off they marched in a formation something like that of the Roman Legion, eight deep in extended order, all the time waving their spears, and dancing and singing a strange song in some outlandish Central African dialect; and every minute one of them would rush out and jump in front of either Wilkinson or me, and he would brandish his spear in our faces with wild shrieks; this was meant to be highly complimentary, but it was lucky

we did not meet with any of the headquarter staff, and thus shock their military^s susceptibilities.

Our two companies had got separated from Tudway and the rest, and for some time we could not find our camels, as another officer had given us wrong information as to where they were. While we were wandering about trying to find them, we unfortunately came across the Sirdar, who was naturally displeased that we were not with the rest of the mounted corps and pursuing the enemy to Suarda (the Dervish headquarters, about 40 miles off). However, we found them at last, and overtook Murdoch and Tudway by noon, whilst they were halting for a short time for breakfast, and for feeding and watering their animals. Tudway had just had a rather strange experience, which illustrates the wild fanaticism of the Dervishes. He was riding peacefully at the head of the regiment, when a Dervish appeared from behind a rock and charged slap bang at him. Tudway shot him with his pistol, which was charged with slugs; immediately afterwards another Dervish appeared from behind the same rock, and charging likewise met with the same fate; and then came a third. Tudway's pistol had only two barrels, so this last one was shot by the soldiers.

We marched on till dark, by which time we had come within a short distance of Suarda. The road lay alongside the river, and between it and the bordering hills there was an open plain, for the most

part nearly a mile broad. After our sojourn in the Batan-ul-Hajar, the country appeared to us to be a Paradise. Many of the villages were deserted, but the few inhabitants that were there seemed pleased to see us, as they would likewise have seemed to the Dervishes, had they been the conquerors.

In the night news came that Suarda had been reinforced; so in the morning when we marched, we expected to have another fight in front of us, but the Dervish demoralisation was complete. They had evacuated the town in the night, and had crossed over to the western bank, to wait and see what would happen. When we arrived, the horse battery had just time to give them a parting shot as they disappeared over a hill. We found at Suarda large stores of dates and corn, and captured a little fleet of twelve laden dhows.

A certain Dervish Amir, called Hassan Wad Nagami, who was a rather well-known man, lived a few miles off on the western bank, and I was detailed to visit his village, and to annex his granaries. This mission, though devoid of interest in itself, gave me the opportunity of seeing how the population lived under the Dervish rule. I found a number of villages, surrounded with irrigated land and groves of palm trees, and a people having every appearance of being fairly happy and prosperous. They were all clad in clean white jibbabs (short smock frocks), with the regulation square coloured patches on them. Their

clothes were all made of locally woven cotton, and the sewing and patchwork were carefully and well done.

I soon began to suspect that the stories of Dervish grinding cruelty and blood-thirstiness were merely a convenient exaggeration. Subsequently, on seeing the Dongola provinces, my suspicions were strengthened. I then remembered how, when Father Ohrwalder escaped from Khartoum and had arrived at Korosko, Colonel Wodehouse, who was then commanding at Wady Halfa, at once sailed down the river and met the Father before any other European had seen him. The Colonel only wished to ask him one question; he said: "What sort of a fellow is the Khalifa?" The Father replied: "He is not a bad sort of a man, but he has to kill to avoid being killed."

I think that most of us now suspected that perhaps we had judged the Dervishes harshly, and an officer, who is now a Major-General, even said that he would rather be a Berberi under their rule than one of certain subject races under the western powers. On being asked to justify his statements, he adduced the condition of the Matabele under England; of the Malagasy under France; East African Negroes under Doctor Peters and Germany; the Red Sea Arabs under Italy; the Armenians under Turkey; the Congo Negroes under Belgium; Cubans under Spain; all Negroes under Portugal; Red Indians under the United States, and English and Kaffirs under Mr Kruger!

The chief evidence for general misgovernment against the Dervishes has been the decrease in wealth and population. At the time of the Dervish conquests a very large emigration took place ; this was succeeded by a most severe famine, and on the top of that came a disastrous war. No case of cruelty towards the population at large, as apart from individuals, has ever been established. Tribes have rebelled and they have been exterminated, no doubt with ferocity ; individuals have been ambitious, and they have lost their heads ; captive Christians who wanted to run away, like Slatin and Lupton, have been kept under strict surveillance, and have tasted prison life, but such incidents were not unknown in civilised Christian countries in comparatively recent times. The Khalifa should not be judged by nineteenth-century standards ; the Soudan is quite 200 years behind England, so in political morality he is a contemporary of our James II.; and he is probably much more estimable than that bigoted tyrant.

We stayed at Suarda for two days, to allow time for an infantry brigade to arrive. Then all the Camel Corps and the cavalry, with the exception of one company and one squadron, marched back to Akasha. This was necessitated by the difficulty of supplying forage. Later, the mounted corps retired still further, to Sarras, which is three hours by train from Halfa, where they stayed till the final advance on Dongola.

The first phase of the expedition was now ended,

and the railway could be completed to Kosheh without fear of interruption. Kosheh, which is a few miles beyond Firkeh,* would be the new base. Our success had evidently produced a great effect on the Dervish morale, but how great it was we had yet to learn.

* Firkeh is frequently but wrongly spelt Firket. My translation of the Arabic is correct.

A. B. T.

CHAPTER VIII

THE EXPEDITION TO DONGOLA (*continued*)

On the Line of Communications—Cholera—Daily Work—Misfortunes—
Repairing the Railway—Move to Kosheh—The Army Advances—
I Overtake Them—Appointed to the Irregulars—Hide and Seek—
The Army crosses the Nile—The March to Dongola—End of the
Expedition and Reflections.

ON the 1st July, I left the Camel Corps and went to Wady Halfa to be staff officer of the Line of Communications. The officer in command was Lieutenant-Colonel Cochrane, and he was, with the exception of Colonel Rundle, R.A., the Adjutant-General, the most hard-worked officer in the expedition; his work too was very uninteresting and tedious, as it consisted almost entirely of forwarding supplies and material to the front. Hitherto he had had no staff officer to assist him, so he applied for one whose strong point would be a capacity for, as he expressed it, "bustling about." Colonel Rundle thought that I possessed that qualification, but I do not think that Colonel Cochrane agreed with him. I reached Halfa the same day as Surgeon-Colonel Gallway, the principal medical officer, who had come up from Cairo.

Cholera had been endemic in Egypt since the previous autumn, and it had recently broken out in Alexandria and Cairo. Gallway appeared to possess a fatal attraction for it, for when he left Cairo and arrived at Assouan it broke out the day he arrived there. He remained some days there to make arrangements to meet it, and then he went to Korosko where, as soon as he put his foot on shore, a man was taken ill with it, and an epidemic began. He had now arrived at Halfa, and confidently expected that it would appear there also, and sure enough the next morning Cochrane's sais (groom) came to us to complain of illness. His appearance was unmistakable; his eyes had fallen in about two inches from their proper place, his black face was a reddish grey, and his skin was parched and wrinkled. In half an hour he collapsed, and lay panting and apparently unconscious. He was carried off and placed in a tent outside the walls, and by mid-day was dead. In the course of the morning six more cases were reported, and they all died.

I was instituted sanitary inspector; the task was extremely unsavoury but equally necessary. I divided the lines into sections. Since the advance, and the consequent displacement of the ordinary staff for such matters, the sanitary arrangements of Halfa had been neglected, and the place was in an indescribable state of filth. To repair all this, convicts were employed in each section as scavengers, sewage carts were repaired

and brought out of their hiding-places, and were daily dragged to the incinerator. The large fleet of dhows, full of supplies, which were moored along the shore whilst waiting for their cargoes to be discharged, were required every night to loose their moorings and to sail over to the other bank. A stern-wheel steamer steamed up and down the foreshore, and by the action of its wheel thoroughly washed the shore and disturbed the polluted water, for the Nile was very low, and there were stagnant back-waters. Piers were stretched out at intervals into the stream to enable the population to obtain clean drinking water. The soda-water manufacturer was ordered to boil all his water previously, but as six of his seven workmen immediately died, and as he consequently closed his establishment, the order proved unnecessary. All these precautions, which were prescribed by Colonel Gallway, were doubtless prudent and necessary, but their influence for good was not immediately seen, for the death-rate rapidly increased, and it soon reached fifty a day. Considering that there were little more than 3000 men, women, and children in the lines, the mortality was very high.

Colonel Hunter, who since the action at Firkeh had had little to do at the front, at once hurried down to Halfa, and occupied himself with visiting the hospitals and talking to the patients. The North Stafford Regiment was moved to a camp some miles up the river, but the cholera followed them, and

they lost twenty men. Dead people were frequently to be met with in stray corners, and on one occasion, while going round the workshops, and thinking that I was awakening a sleeping sluggard, I found that I was kicking a corpse. Eighteen out of twenty-one patients always died. No Englishmen nor Soudanese man ever recovered, though a few Soudanese women did. The Egyptians had the largest number of cases and the smallest proportionate number of deaths. This was possibly owing to hereditary influence, for cholera epidemics are periodical in Egypt. The Dervish prisoners, probably for the opposite reason, suffered the most of all. No hospital attendant was ever attacked, though an English doctor, Surgeon Captain Traske, died of the disease. Mr Vallam, the chief engineer, my old friend Major Roderick Owen, and Captain Fenwick died, as did a Scotch and several Maltese and Levantine foremen. Nearly all of us suffered from a mild type of the illness, and found ourselves one night or other seized with a violent attack of vomiting and choleraic symptoms. However careless one may be of death, the experience is not a pleasant one. The type of disease, though it was almost invariably fatal, was peculiar, and in some respects benign. Premonitory diarrhœa was usually slight, and frequently absent, but after a few hours the patient collapsed, and died quietly within another four. The average duration of the

illness was about eight hours. The epidemic flourished in Halfa for about three weeks, and then it rapidly declined, and in a week more, though a few sporadic cases occurred, for which the doctors could assign no reason, it was at an end.

As soon as Gallway had seen all his preparations in good working order, he had left for the front to make arrangements to meet a possible visitation there. The day he arrived the cholera broke out at Kosheh, and spread to all the places between there and Wady Halfa. The camp was at once moved from the river bank to the desert, and the epidemic was killed in ten days, but not before it had caused severe ravages among the troops.

The spirits of the Muslim troops were absolutely unaffected by what to many would have been trying conditions. Their habitual calm was entirely unruffled, and no one ever dreamed of proposing such adventitious aids to cheerfulness as athletic sports and smoking concerts. However, we had not time to be depressed by cholera or anything else, for from morn till evening, and often during the night, business had to be done. All correspondence was transacted by telegraph, and there was no end of it. Telegrams vied with cholera bacilli in rapid germination; nervous irritation reigned supreme; good temper and affable manners became a memory of the past, and this continued for two and a half months till the final advance on Dongola.

It is difficult to realise the amount and variety of work that had to be completed before the expedition could proceed. Over and above the ordinary routine work of supplying 15,000 men, a large reserve of supplies had to be accumulated. The railway had to be extended to Kosheh, 107 miles from Halfa. This meant landing, loading, and counting material and coal, and then forwarding it to the rail head. Seven steamers had to be stripped of their armaments and to be pulled over the cataracts. They were all iron vessels, so to hit a rock was to hit it for the last time. This work was absolutely necessary for the success of the expedition, and was a matter of great delicacy, and one that required a conspicuous power of organisation and promptitude, steady nerves, and a quick eye. All these were eminently possessed by Colonel Hunter, who alone was responsible for the success of this difficult undertaking, and who himself stood on the bridge and piloted every vessel over each cataract. The "great gate" of the second cataract is really a series of waterfalls, and the passage is only about 30 feet broad. Having taken a holiday from the office, I was on board one of the steamers when they were being hauled over the last fall. The vessel was hauled by three hawsers in front, and by one on each side, and held by two stern guys to keep her steady. Hunter was on the bridge with a bugler who sounded the "advance," "halt,"

"right," "left," or "rear," according as the crews were required to haul or hold steady on the various ropes. Two thousand men were engaged in hauling, and an officer, both on board and on land, was in charge of each rope. I was that day on board in charge of one of the stern guys. On coming to the foot of the "gate," though in figures the angle was probably small, we appeared to be being dragged up a waterfall, and the bow of the vessel seemed to tower above our heads. The water rushed like a thousand mill streams, and though 2000 men were straining at the ropes, we progressed only inch by inch. The passage lasted twenty minutes, and then we had reached the pool. On one occasion the strain was so great that one of the front hawsers parted; the extra weight thus thrown on the other two was too great for their haulers to withstand, the vessel began to go astern and the water to wash over the after part of the lower deck. Those on shore thought that we were lost, but the crew of the broken hawser soon took the strain on the remaining ones, the vessel stopped, then gradually forged ahead, and we got safely through.

It may be remembered that in the 1884 expedition the British army attempted to pass up only two wooden boats, and that one of these was wrecked in the passage. On this occasion, however, one hundred and twenty sailing boats had to perform the same feat, and the number of wrecks was very few.

A new gunboat, in large and heavy sections, had to be unloaded from barges, placed on a train, and unloaded and put together at K'osheh. This was a very slow and difficult business, as our mechanical contrivances were few and primitive. Coal barges and steamers and sailing boats full of grain and material arrived daily, and had to be unloaded and their cargoes forwarded by train.

Our arms had been more successful than we had hoped, but other difficulties had arisen which had not been expected. Everything in nature seemed to work against us. In the first place, there was the visitation of cholera, which never before in history had been known to reach as far as Assuan; then the rise of the Nile was exceptionally late, in consequence of which the passage of the cataracts and river transportation was very much delayed, and when at last its flood came, there accompanied it three consecutive weeks of steady southerly wind, and the sailing boats could make no way. On the top of all this came heavy rains and floods such as had not been known in a lifetime, which washed away the railway for miles.

The General will forgive my saying that it was only when these difficulties arose that many of us appreciated his qualities as a commander. Anybody can be successful when all goes well and the road is straight, but to meet reverses cheerfully, and to surmount them, is not so easy; and to do so proves a leader's worth.

At last all our troubles—food, coal, railway, south winds, late Nile, and cholera—had slowly passed away; the army was concentrating, the steamers had climbed the cataracts, the advanced post had been pushed forward, and a general advance was about to be made. Then a storm came, and in the morning twenty miles of railway had been swept away. The advance was stopped, and the troops were sent back to repair the line. I was put in charge of the northern section of the repairs to act for Colonel Cochrane. I went out into the desert, and camped with my two friends, Lieutenants Gerouard and Stevenson, R.E., who were to direct the works.

Rain of any description only occurs about once in ten years in the Batan-ul-Hajar, and no provision had been made against it by the construction of bridges and culverts, or by laying the line outside the course of a possible flood. On the contrary, the beds of the different valleys had been chosen as affording the easiest ground, and thus avoiding the necessity of cuttings and tunnels. In a military railway that has to be constructed at the rate of three-quarters of a mile a day; to have done otherwise would have been impossible.

In our section we had one infantry battalion, about 800 transport conscripts, the North Staffordshire Regiment, and half the railway battalion. The work to be done, at first sight appeared rather overpowering. Every embankment had vanished, and the rails hung

across the valleys like aërial switchbacks. In the bottom of the valleys, where it was straight, the line was buried under 9 feet of sand. At the curves it had been carried away, and the rails were found twisted like corkscrews, and washed away in many instances 300 yards from what had been the formation level.

Every one, both English and Egyptian, worked as if his life depended on it, but the latter performed marvels, and bore off the palm, for the English regiment was not in hard condition, and the doctors placed their veto on the long working hours which I imposed upon the Egyptians. It may be that I have an undue admiration for the Fellah, but I can never think of him without respect and affection.

It was a burning hot day and a dust storm was blowing. I was walking out to the working parties when I was overtaken by a young transport conscript (he could not be called a soldier) who was pushing a trolley. Without a word from me he at once stopped and invited me to get in, which I readily did. He then broke into a trot, and jogged along for a mile, when we reached his camp whither he was bound. I saw that he was tired, so I got off and thanked him for the lift, but as I had another half mile to go, he insisted on my getting on the trolley again, and continued to push me. After about 100 yards he fell flat down in a dead faint. I had him carried back to camp, and I feared that he was dead, but to my relief he came

to life again in half an hour. I afterwards made him a present, which, though small in itself, represented a good deal to him. At first he refused to accept it, and only eventually did so when I asked him to buy something with it as a remembrance. Now this man was not an old soldier who might have been imbued with old-fashioned military traditions of his duty to an officer, he was but a raw boy, fresh from the plough, who probably had never seen me before. What he did was entirely uncalled for and unnecessary, but I very much doubt if an English recruit would even have thought of it.

When we settled down to the work it did not seem so formidable, and in twelve days it was finished, and communication restored. Personally, I was rather sorry, as our little camp had been a very pleasant one, and I dreaded the prospect of changing the pure air and outdoor life for the smells of Halfa and the confinement of an office. Although the appointment that I held was not the one I should have chosen for myself, still it was in a way a liberal education. Through it I had the privilege of acquiring an insight into the mysteries of an office, and into the art of docketing and of registration; also into the abstruse science of railway construction, laying out curves and straights, levelling, packing, and ballasting, and of its mechanical appliances; of boring-rods, sheerlegs, levers, cranes, jacks and jim-crows; and also gained a

knowledge of the amenities of the life of a sewage inspector, grave-digger, undertaker, and coffin-maker.

By 10th September our troubles had passed away, this time for good. The army was concentrated at the front, and was about to advance. I had been pestering Rundle with numerous telegrams requesting to be allowed to accompany the army, and not to be left behind tied to an ignominious office, but I could get no satisfactory answer.

On 13th September, the office of the line of communication was moved to Kosheh, and Colonel Cochrane and I arrived after a fortunate journey of twenty-four hours, in which 107 miles were traversed by train, at the average rate of $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles an hour. Cochrane was suffering from dysentery and was very unwell. He was an old campaigner, and had often had to rough it in his time, but now the opportunity had come he could travel in comfort, and he need not stint himself in baggage—and he *did not*. So on our arrival at Kosheh I spent the remainder of the day in that “bustling about,” for which I possessed a fictitious reputation, pitching his and my own tents, arranging our kit, and making all as comfortable as could be for the future.

The army was now 70 miles in a direct line in front of us, and I had given up all hope of joining it, but I ventured another telegram, at the risk of overtrying the patience of the hard-worked but

long-suffering Adjutant-General. Nine o'clock came, and, tired and angry, I went to bed. At eleven o'clock I was awakened by an orderly who put a bundle of telegrams into my hands. Almost the first I opened was one to tell me to join the army, and to report myself to Colonel Rundle as soon as possible. I hastily dressed, woke up Gochrane, informed him of my orders, and wished him good-bye, with the hope that we should meet again at the front. I then left the bundle of telegrams on his washing-stand, saddled my horses, loaded my camel, and sallied forth into the desert.

I took a short cut across an angle of the river to Abu Sari. The distance was reputed to be only 32 miles, though really over 40. A few days previously two brigades had marched over this road, and although water depôts had been made in two places, the heat was so excessive and the dust storms so severe that, I think, seven men died of sunstroke during the march, and all the troops arrived at the river in the last stage of exhaustion. The telegraph had been laid the whole distance, so there was no danger of losing the way; but the going was bad, as the route passed alternately over heavy sand and rocky hills.

I had stupidly bought a great big Saidi, or native horse of middle Egypt, which, although a fine animal to the eye, lacked the stamina of a thorough-bred arab, and by the time I had gone

30 miles he was completely worn out, and I had to lead him for the remainder of the march. At last, at one o'clock in the afternoon, after fourteen hours, I saw the welcome Nile flowing between barren steep hills, and fringed with a line of palms. This was Abu Sari. There were a few Berber houses and a tomb, and further on, in an open space, there were the grass huts of the army's camp, now deserted except for a few forlorn sick camels, who were grazing on the scanty Halfa grass. My servants, with the pony and the camel, arrived about four o'clock. The next day another march of about 30 miles through a much pleasanter and fairly well inhabited country brought me to Ferieg, where I found the army encamped. They had been there two days, and were to move on the morrow, so I was just in time. I saw Rundle and the staff working in their shirt sleeves; Rundle told me that I had not lost much time in joining, and referred me to Major Wingate of the Intelligence Department, who informed me that I was to be in charge of the Arab irregulars, who were on the west bank, and that the rest of the army was on the eastern one, that I might expect some skirmishes, that I was to communicate with the army, keeping it informed of any news I might pick up, and that on the march I was to keep abreast of the gunboats, which were under the command of Commander Colville, R.N.

My force was nothing very magnificent in the way of a command, but it was a go-as-you-please, no-one-cares-a-damn-what-you-do sort of a concern, and as the rest of the army was on the other side of the river, I was my own master, and no one could worry me with that "exercise of supervision" which a senior officer dearly loves and a junior so cordially detests.

We marched more or less abreast of the army for two days, but to keep in touch with it through the steamers was impossible. The river was full of islands, and the navigable channel was frequently on the farther side, while the army was sometimes a long way inland. All that we could see of it was a cloud of dust in the distance.

On the afternoon of the second day about a hundred Dervish cavalry with a few foot hove in sight. We had finished our march. The gunboats were out of sight, and separated from us by some islands; our camels were grazing. Now, the Nile Arab values the skin of his camel nearly as highly as he does his own. This is a very high price, for with him self-preservation is more than a natural instinct, it is a passion, and its strength is almost sublime. Their perturbation, therefore, cannot be adequately described, but I managed to collect them on the top of a rocky knoll, with their camels behind it. The Dervishes cantered up to within about 600 yards of us, and began to shoot. My army began to shoot, too, and to shout and yell in a way

that would frighten braver people than Dervishes. The display of so much valour was irresistible. The Barbarian fled before the Hero, and it is needless to say that no one on either side was hurt in this disorderly combat.

Shortly afterwards a boat came across with a message to say that the army would on the next day attack the Dervishes' fortified position at Kerma, situated about 10 miles off, and that I was to march to Akkad, a few miles further on, and to drive out the small Dervish outpost that was reported to be there. With the exception of this outpost, the whole of the Dervish army was supposed to be at Kerma, where it was expected that the decisive action would be fought.

I reached Akkad at sunset, and drove out the dozen or so Dervishes who were there. Then some villagers brought me news that the Dervishes had evacuated Kerma, and that their whole force had crossed over the river to Hafir, a place about four miles off, and on my side of the river. This seemed rather serious, and as it did to the gentleman on his first crossing the threshold of Pentonville, so it occurred to me that unless things soon changed for the better, I should be sorry that I had ever come. So I sent a swimmer across the river—here, owing to the numerous islands, about two miles broad—with a note to Wingate to tell him the news, and then set to work to fortify my position. This the Arabs did in a half-

hearted fashion, and tried to crowd the courtyard I was making defensible with their camels. I turned them out again, they grumbled loudly, saying that we were but one to ten thousand, and that our proper place was a long way further north.

At about midnight they brought me a villager who said that he had seen a large Dervish force being paraded at evening, and that they were coming before dawn to finish us off. I felt quite sure he was lying, but the Arabs refused to stay, so I returned about four miles to another rocky knoll. If, instead of the Arabs, I had had with me regular soldiers, I should, of course, have stayed where I was. My position was strong, and it would have been well fortified. All the Dervish cannon would have been employed against our gunboats further on, so there would have been a very good chance of a successful resistance until I was relieved either by a gunboat or by a portion of our army after it had crossed over; and, failing this, the very worst that could have happened would have been that we should have all made a very dignified and comparatively comfortable departure, and our friends would have found a qualified consolation in viewing several and dissimilar drawings of the episode, by melodramatic artists, in the illustrated newspapers, drawn from imaginary "sketches on the spot," or from "telegraphic information."

But as it was, the glories of a modern Thermopylæ were, perhaps not altogether unwillingly, denied me,

and prudence had to take the place of prospective valour.

The next day at dawn the Dervish scouts appeared; we gave them a volley and they retired. We went after them; they stopped and gave us one in return. We retired again, and so on; and all day long we played a game of hide-and-seek. It is impossible that they could have realised that we had no troops behind us, or they would never have missed the opportunity of gaining so cheap a victory.

We passed the night in quiet, and in the morning heard that the Dervishes had evacuated Hafir during the night, after a day's bombardment of their position by our gunboats and batteries. During the bombardment their general, Muhammad Wad Bishara, had been severely wounded, and this fortunate accident appears to have demoralised him and his men, for during the day they had worked their one battery with great courage, and had given our gunboats a good peppering. These boats were armour-clad and bullet-proof, and although after the action they presented the appearance of targets on a rifle range after a long day's practice, yet our losses were very small, being, if I remember rightly, only an English sergeant killed and Commander Colville and one or two other men wounded. . .

Mr Mortimer, a Cairo merchant, to whom we owed the luxuries of tinned meats, sardines, and cognac, had been infected with martial ardour, and

had smuggled himself into one of the vessels. On discovery he was stowed away in an unarmoured deck-house. Being a very stout man he was unusually vulnerable, and bullets made holes in his hat and clothes, but fortunately they spared his skin.

When we heard of the Dervish retreat all my followers became very cheerful, brave, and boastful, and we marched into Hafir with flags flying, in time to meet the first of our troops as they crossed over. I have since thought that on this occasion I did not do my duty to myself. I was quite alone, there was no one to say me nay, and that glorious modern Thermopylæ, to the possibility of which I have referred, might well have taken place in imagination and in despatches, without any fear of hostile historical criticism. Never again will such an occasion present itself of doing what is euphemistically known in military circles as "making the most of it." But a silly regard for truth (which is only vanity disguised), coupled with an unreasonable indignation against my poor Arabs, restrained me; and in reply to official enquiries, I readily confessed that no deeds of heroism had been performed, and that I was never in any danger, because I had taken good care to keep out of it.

The passage of the troops took two days, during which time my people did the work of the cavalry, who were the last to cross. Then we started again, and in two marches we came in touch with the Dervishes.

News came in the night that they had fortified their position in Dongola, and that they were resolute in their determination to fight; so when we marched out in the early morning of the 23rd, every man expected a combat, and probably a severe one, and I believe that the few officers who had any property to leave, prudently made their wills. We were in battle formation; in the front line were three brigades, two mountain batteries, a Maxim battery, and the North Stafford Regiment (who had joined the army, but who were never fortunate enough to receive their baptism of fire in the expedition). Each battalion had two companies in support, and four in the front line in column, at deploying interval; the flank battalions were in column. The second line, or reserve, consisted of one brigade. The cavalry, horse artillery, and camel corps were well in front on the right flank. The General and his staff, escorted by a troop of cavalry, rode in front of the centre. Among the head-quarter staff was Colonel Cochrane, who had come up during the night in the new gunboat to see the end of what he had largely assisted to prepare, and I was heartily glad to see him.

The neighbourhood of Dongola is a vast open plain — an ideal battle-field; and the army as it advanced presented a magnificent and imposing spectacle, and one which must have inspired the General with a well-earned pride. It was this spectacle that we had been busy in preparing for six months,

and it represented much work and trouble. I had left my Irregulars, who were being employed as a baggage-guard for the day, and I was a galloper to one of the brigadiers. The Dervish force, we learnt from captured documents, was nearly 5000 strong. We had over 12,000 in the fighting line, but 5000 men who hope to die as Dervishes always used to hope, even if they be greatly out-numbered, are not a foe to be despised.

When we started in the morning there was a thick mist lying over the plain, but the morning sun dispelled it, and all became bright. As the sun rose higher it caused mirages in front of us, and it was difficult to distinguish objects with any accuracy.

As we approached Dongola we could see a long dark line. This could not be 5000 men—it must be at least 30,000, and all in battle array. We gazed through our field-glasses, but we could be sure of nothing. Still, I could see no flags, so I said to my brigadier, Major Lewis, that I thought what we saw was the Dervish houses, and that they themselves had run away. For some time we were in doubt, but soon saw that this was the case. The gunboats were ahead of us, and had enfiladed the Dervish position, though, as a matter of fact, they did little damage, and their effect was almost entirely moral.

The gunboats, the recollection of Firkeh, and possibly the decline of religious zeal, had told their tale, and though the Dervishes had stood behind their

earthworks till we had come into sight, in the end their hearts had failed them, and we occupied the town without opposition; but the mounted corps were engaged for some time in pursuit. The Dervish town was a very large settlement of squalid streets, situated, according to their custom, in the desert, about two miles from the river. The old Arab town was a deserted crumbling mass of ruins. Their retreat without a blow was a general surprise, for if they had stood behind their works they could have made a good resistance. The fortune of war is proverbially uncertain, and they might just possibly have been successful.

This march achieved the object of the expedition, and in the course of the next few days the last of the Dervishes were driven out of the province, and garrisons were established at Merawi, Korti, and Debbeh. By the time this book is published, Berber, and possibly Khartoum, may have been taken, though prophecy before an event is dangerous to the reputation of the prophet.

The expedition was now over, and what a scramble there had been to join it! The gate of the War Office had become like the pit door of a theatre, and a long *queue* of eager applicants had daily stretched down Pall Mall as far as Marlborough House. Now the few fortunate ones were returning, and what were they the better for it? By what infatuation had they been possessed?

Sitting on a camel in the desert in the midst of a nature, arid yet fascinating, the hot wind blowing on one's face, and a burning sun stimulating one's eyes, nerves, and brain, there comes to me an indescribable *joie de vivre* and with it a *joie de mourir*—a feeling of exultation and a feeling of melancholy. All is contradictory as the desert itself—a fair mirage in the wilderness!

At such a time I have often asked myself these questions. There can be no pleasure in excessive work, in bad food, and in discomfort? There, too, can be no pleasure in danger *per se*, however slight it be. Some, perhaps, may find delight in the prospect of slaughter and of seeing blood, but they are surely few. Some may wish to wear a coloured ribbon on their coat, but these cannot be many. A few more may be worn out and *blasé*, and seek new sensations, and perhaps some are ambitious and hope to make a career, not realizing the paltriness of their ambition.

Through many a march I have thought it over, and I think that it is Vanity that drives us on unceasingly and without mercy. It is all Vanity—the pleasure of going where many wish to go but where few can go; the pleasure of seeing scenes which others may not see, of feeling emotions which others may not feel, and of wearing ribbons which others may not wear.

Then this Vanity can flatter ever, and sometimes she charms us almost to forget herself and to make

us think that we are the unconscious inheritors of traditional motives that have made England's glory— motives which have found eloquent expression in Sir Humphrey Gilbert's memorial to Elizabeth, when he said :—

“Never, therefore, mislike with me for taking in hand any laudable and honest enterprise; for if through pleasure or idleness we purchase shame, the pleasure vanishes away, but the shame abideth for ever.

“Give me leave, therefore, without offence, always to live and die in this mind: that he is not worthy to live at all that, for fear of danger of death, shunneth his country's service and his own honour, seeing that death is inevitable, and the fame of virtue is immortal; wherefore, on this behalf, “*Mutare vel timere sperno.*” *

* J. A. Froude—“England's Forgotten Worthies.”

EPILOGUE

SOME will be runners in a race, others will have an interest in those that run, but some will be content to be spectators only, and these are wisest ; for they are ignorant alike of success and of failure. Success can come to few, but nearly all must fail.

So it is in life. A wise man will refuse to run, and withdrawing to a corner of the stand, careless of the runners and of the stakes, he will await the finish, knowing that it will be all one to have won or lost, or to have stood out and watched the strife.

I thought to be wise at last, but I was not so ; and very soon I was again upon the sea. And as nightly the northern star sunk lower, and the Southern Cross beamed higher, and as a new world opened, and when at last the northern star was drowned behind the ocean, with it died all regrets for wisdom left behind ; and the constellations of the south shone bright and glorious, giving hope and beauty to the future and the unknown.

SEQUEL

Major Thruston's Life in Unyoro, and Death in Usoga, and an Account of the Mutiny of the Uganda Rifles, September 1897.

WITH the last chapter the "Personal Experiences" end.

The hope expressed in the Epilogue was destined to a dark eclipse at Lubwa's. Major Thruston was destined never to see again his home in England, or those there who so eagerly longed for his return. There remains only, therefore, to tell the little that is known of the last few months of his life in Africa, and to describe the events and blunders that brought the troops, in whom he took so deep and lively an interest, to desertion and mutiny, culminating in his death, and ultimately in their own destruction.

There had been many changes in the Protectorate in the interval between Thruston's leaving Africa early in 1895 and his return in 1897. On Colvile's departure, too ill to appoint a successor, Mr Jackson, primarily a naturalist and explorer, but who was also a vice-consul for British East Africa, assumed the charge of the Protectorate. During the four and a half months of his administration he permitted the extension of the English dominion by a continua-

tion of the series of expeditions against the neighbouring tribes, undertaken somewhat at hap-hazard it is true, and without the sanction of the Home Government. In fact, it was not till after Mr Berkeley had replaced Mr Jackson, and become the first regularly appointed Commissioner, that this sanction was obtained. The English Protectorate was proclaimed over Unyoro and Usoga later in 1895, and in 1896 over Nandi, Kavirondo, and the adjoining provinces.

During the first part of Mr Berkeley's administration all appeared to go well. In Uganda proper there was a very considerable increase in material prosperity. The Protestant Waganda chiefs actively supported the Government, influenced thereto by the missionaries, and also, doubtless, in part by their being well paid for their adherence, in some instances, it is to be feared, at the expense of the Wunyoro, even of those who had quietly submitted to the new *régime*.

All was not, however, so secure as it seemed. Mwanga found that his encouragement of the Europeans had led, not, as he had fondly hoped, to an unlimited supply of beads and "americano" (cotton cloth—the local currency), but to a complete limitation of his power, and even to a supervision over his court and harem, and was greatly disgusted thereby. In November 1896, his discontent was further aggravated. He had endeavoured to evade the

payment of the duty 'on some ivory, and this being betrayed to the authorities by some of his chiefs, he was taken very roughly to task, was no longer allowed to exercise the little power still left him without the approval of a council of "loyal chiefs," and told that a recurrence of the offence would lead to his deposition from the throne.

At the time of Major Thruston's arrival in Uganda, Mwanga was still brooding over his wrongs. There were other changes. Kabarega was no longer acknowledged as King of Unyoro, and a considerable part of that country had been divided among the Waganda chiefs who had assisted the Government. Despite the material prosperity of Kampala and the surrounding country, there existed throughout the Protectorate a wide-spread and deep hostility to the English rule. This does not appear to have been realised by the authorities, though well-known to all intimately acquainted with the natives.

In the summer of 1897, Mwanga, already deeply dissatisfied, and, it is said, further irritated by the not very tactful treatment he received from Major Ternan, decided to make his escape from Kampala, and to endeavour to rally his adherents and the Romanist faction, together with the pagan population, and with them to drive the obnoxious English from his dominions.

His secret was well kept and his time judiciously chosen. Ternan was 300 miles away on an expedition



MAJOR THRUSION'S HOUSE AT MASINDI.

against the Wa-Kamassia. The Soudanese troops, the mainstay of our rule, were murmuring at their hard work and bad pay. The Queen's Jubilee rejoicings had just been held in Kampala, and the Europeans there were quite unaware of his intentions, when one morning (6th July) it was found that he had fled to Budu, the province where his adherents were strongest. Ternan and his troops were recalled in haste, and reached Bida in Budu, by forced marches. After some fighting, Mwanga and his party were defeated, Mwanga himself taking refuge in the German territory. Ternan returned to Kampala, and announced to the Waganda chiefs that Mwanga was formally deposed, and his infant son was to reign in his stead.

Ternan's congratulations to the chiefs on this occasion, on the complete suppression of the rebellion, were unfortunately premature. Within a month it had broken out again, and though the rebels were again defeated, the rebellious spirit was by no means extinguished, on the contrary it had spread. Usoga was ripe for revolt, and the Muslims, ever yearning for the good old days of unlimited slave raiding, were wavering in their loyalty, whilst the mass of heathen waited developments to join the winning side.

This was the critical time chosen to denude the country of the troops.

Major Thruston on arriving at Entebbi (April 1897)

found that Major Ternan did not intend to return at once to England, and therefore proceeded to Unyoro to take up the civil and military charge of that province. Thruston wrote from Entebbi, 16th April :

“My billet is the civil and military charge of Unyoro. These are the stations—

Mruli (Umruli)

Masindi (Headquarters)

Fovira

Fadjoa (Murchison Falls)

Hoima

Kitanwe (Lake Albert)

Kibiro (Lake Albert)

Mahaji Kabir (West of Lake Albert).

“I have a subaltern (Dugmore), a doctor (Ansorge), and an Armenian storekeeper (Moses), so the work will not be so exhausting as last time. Baron D’hanis’ expedition has had a disaster, his advance guard having mutinied and killed all the European officers. Do not repeat to newspapers. The mutineers are now on the Nile, somewhere near Wadelai, I believe, in our territory ; Madocks has gone to find out. . . . Kampala is now a large town, with streets and Indian and Arab traders, a mosque, and about thirty churches and conventicles. . . . Unyoro is still ungodly, skulls and crocodiles not as yet being displaced by missionary hymn-books. Kabarega is an exile in Fatiko, and dresses like an Arab Dervish—the old rascal !” •

Thruston left Entebbi on the 19th April, and arrived at his headquarters at Masindi on 1st May ; thence he writes :

“Nice clean fort and lot of cultivation, but an uninteresting

site, being in the middle of the forest. . . . I am off on arrival of the mail for Hoima and the Lake Albert. The country is quiet. Most of the chiefs have submitted."

Thruston's time was, during his short stay, much occupied in endeavouring to ameliorate the miserable condition of the troops and people under his charge. He visited every station but one in Unyoro, making such improvements as he could. Dr Ansorge, in his "Under an African Sun," says: "There was no hospital at Fadjoa, but Major Thruston most kindly gave me *carte blanche* to build one," and also mentions the great assistance Major Thruston was to him in adding to and improving the arrangements of the hospital at Masindi. Thruston's letters rarely allude to the difficulties he met with. But on 13th May, only a few days after his arrival in Unyoro, when all had been reported as quiet, he says: "Kavalli" (the chief who is so frequently mentioned in his narrative) "is dead. Kabarega is at Fatiko. His son raiding us near Umruli. I have asked Ternan to let me have a slap at him."

On 1st June:—

*Kabarega is reported to be on the move again, and to be making for Wakeddi—the country opposite Umruli. If he comes, I expect I shall have to turn him out unless he stays quiet, but at present I have no troops to spare, as Ternan has taken two companies to the expedition to Nandi. Hoima is neglected and tumble-down, but the country around is well cultivated and populous. I have had an unpretentious house built for me at Umruli, which is a desolate

spot about six inches above the level of the Nile and surrounded by sudd. It ought to be unhealthy, but apparently it is not so, whereas at Fadjoa and Kitanwe, both of them high and dry, there is considerable sickness among the soldiers. This place (Masindi) is probably healthy; it is at an elevation of about 3500 feet, and there are no mosquitoes."

Kabarega was at his old tricks—giving every possible trouble but never standing up for a fair fight, preferring to pursue his favourite methods of assassination.

Thruston says :—

"MASINDI, 3rd *July* 1897.—It is rather trying work to attempt to govern this country; everywhere, lying, intrigue, and obstruction. Kabarega caused poison to be given to a friendly great chief, and he died, but I have had the poisoner killed. I have had also to punish another village. . . . I have written to Ternan to send me Kabarega's young son to make him king. . . . I have been occupying myself with bridge-making and laying out a town for the ivory merchants, and am now gathering the Indian corn harvest."

Dr Ansorge gives a very interesting account of the death of the chief above mentioned :—

"Chief Amara was the most influential and powerful chief in Unyoro, and as he joined the English cause from the outset, he was bitterly hated by the ex-King Kabarega. One day Amara informed Major Thruston that some one had bewitched him, and that he was about to die. The Major sent Amara to me; but I found nothing whatever to warrant Amara's gloomy forebodings. . . . I treated him for indigestion and flatulence, and after a few days he declared



THE FADJOA, OR NUG HINON FALLS, VICTORIA NILE.

he was cured, and ceased to come to me. Suddenly one night I was called out of bed to see him, as he was said to be dying. I did not stop to dress, but on reaching his hut found life already extinct. A *post-mortem* examination would have been considered desecration by his subjects. I told the Major, however, that I felt convinced that Chief Amara was poisoned. This made Major Thruston watch for a clue, and he found out that one of the disloyal sub-chiefs had received a present of three cows from ex-King Kabarega as a payment for having brought about the death of Chief Amara. A punitive expedition followed, in which the sub-chief was killed and his village destroyed. . . . Major Thruston proclaimed Ajaka, Amara's infant son, to be chief in succession to his father . . . and Msoga, a nephew of Amara, to be regent during Ajaka's minority." *

Major Thruston, in course of his inspection of stations in July, visited the Murchison falls of the Victoria Nile; he says: "They are extremely grand—a drop of 120 feet, and the roar to be heard for miles." On 27th August, Thruston, hearing of Ternan's departure, left Unyoro for Entebbi, Uganda, the headquarters of the Uganda Rifles, to take over the command. During the two years Major Thruston had been absent from the Protectorate, the Uganda Rifles had been seldom at rest. In the numerous expeditions undertaken in these years they had earned the complete approbation of the officers with them; Cunningham, Pulteney, Vandeleur, and others all spoke in their praise.

In the spring of 1897 the garrison of Katwe, in

* "Under an African Sun" (by Dr W. J. Ansorge) 1899.

Toro, part of Captain Sitwell's company, gave signal proof of their loyalty when driving off the Manyema soldiers of the Congo Free State, who, having mutinied and murdered their European officers, attacked that fort. This company remained, though half starved and in rags, faithful throughout the ensuing mutiny. This incident and the fact that a little later in the same year the Unyoro garrisons under Major Thruston remained unmoved by the presence on the borders of that state of a large body of the same mutinous Manyema, disproves the assertion that has been made that the wave of mutinous feeling spreading from the Congo Free State was one of the causes of the mutiny.

Major Thruston found the condition of the troops in Unyoro such as to excite his compassion. The pay of four rupees, the same they had received from the impecunious I.B.E.A. Co., paid in often indifferent cloth, was always in arrears. Porters in the Protectorate received from ten to twelve rupees, and the Soudanese troops in the adjoining British East African Protectorate twenty-six rupees, a month. The cloth for uniform, tarboosh, and boots the Rifles were supposed to receive yearly, must have been most irregularly doled out, for from photographs and the descriptions of various writers, they appear to have been, if possible, worse clothed than when first introduced into Uganda. He prepared a project to amend the condition of the troops, and for the re-

organisation of the whole regiment when the command should devolve on him.

But if the state of the troops in Unyoro and Toro and Usoga was bad, that of the companies who, having been with Ternan in the Nandi expedition, had in July been taken by him to Budu, was worse. Their discipline, left almost entirely to the control of the native officers, or Effendis, became very slack.* The Effendis being always with them, their influence greatly exceeded that of the young English officials or officers who were from time to time attached to the regiment. Their pay was at this time six months in arrear; they had been campaigning and absent from their families for months. This was sufficient in itself to cause discontent, but it was not all. They had always been hard-worked, but on Major Ternan becoming not only Commandant but Acting Commissioner, they were hurried hither and thither by forced marches, now to suppress a rising, now to escort a caravan, now to make a distant expedition against some marauding tribe. The Commandant, it is rumoured, was harsh. He certainly seems to have been deficient in consideration for his men. The amount of marching the troops did in the few months preceding the mutiny is almost incredible. Their European officers were, with few exceptions, ignorant of Arabic.

* Major Ternan reduced 21 non-commissioned officers in No. 9 Company, of which Belal Effendi was captain, and every officer, commissioned and non-commissioned, in No. 4, Mabruk Effendi's company, one step for insubordination.

In June (1897) instructions were received by Major Ternan from the Foreign Office to furnish* 300 of the Uganda Rifles with numerous porters and equipment for the large caravan then being collected at the coast. This contingent was to meet the expedition near the Mau Plateau, about 300 miles from Kampala. The expedition, ostensibly for the survey of the sources of the river Juba and the Italian boundary, but in reality destined for Fashoda, was the largest and best equipped ever seen in the country. It was commanded by Major, now Colonel, J. R. Macdonald, who had with him 10 European officers, 50 Sikhs, 7 maxims and about 700 porters and armed Swahili.

It is to be regretted that no protest was made to the Foreign Office against the order to detach the overworked and underpaid troops on a distasteful service at the time when, in the opinion of many, our very existence in Uganda was threatened. Ternan chose for service with this expedition Companies Nos. 4, 7, and 9, but before the expedition reached the Mau plateau came the news of the rebellion in Budu, and Major Ternan, as has been already mentioned, took them by forced marches to Bida in Buda (360 miles). After some fighting and marching there, they, in order not to delay the expedition, were sent also by forced marches back to Macdonald's camp at Ngare Nyuki, on the Mau plateau (some 370 miles).

The companies were indignant in thus being again selected for hard work, whilst other companies

were left in comparative ease at their stations. The increase of the pay by two rupees a month and the payment of arrears was not sufficient to allay their discontent. Lord Salisbury's instructions that their women and families should be paid and cared for in their absence apparently were not communicated to them, certainly not to the rank and file. To leave their wives and families to starvation or prostitution did not commend itself to the men. They feared the expedition; it was going into an unknown and dreaded* country for an indefinite period, and its commander they distrusted. They objected to the constant expeditions, "particularly those under Major Macdonald," and Bilal Effendi swore "on the head of his son," the most solemn oath a Muslim can take, that "he would not go this expedition with Major Macdonald." It seems that Major Macdonald's behaviour to them and to their leader, Selim Bey, which has been before related, had not been forgotten or forgiven, though four years had elapsed. This and the men's discontent was known to many at Kampala, and it is difficult to understand how, as was stated by the Duke of Devonshire in the House of Lords,† Major Ternan, under whose personal command the men had been for months, and who accompanied some seventy of them on their way to join the Macdonald expedition, should

* This is shown by the stipulations in the original contract between the Soudanese and Colonel Lugard.

† Parliamentary Debates, 31st March 1898.

not have been aware and not have had "the remotest conception" of the discontent.

The first detachment of the contingent reached the camp of the expedition on 20th September, sullen, ragged, and worn out after their forced march of more than 350 miles. They were that evening told that rations for one woman or boy to accompany them would be allowed, and became less sullen. No rest was allowed, and the next morning they were sent off with the first column of the expedition. On the 22nd the second detachment followed with the second column, and on the 23rd the last with the main column, Major Macdonald himself being in command.

On their arrival at the camp the men had asked to see the commander of the expedition. Macdonald declined to speak to them except through the native captain, and Mabruk Effendi, the only one present with the force, appears to have suppressed some parts of Major Macdonald's reply. At any rate, Macdonald seems to have understood that the men, who had sent their women away as a protest, did not wish for the women, for he withdrew the extra ration before mentioned. The protest, however, secured his attention, for he came himself and asked what was the matter. This limited success did not much avail the men, as his only answer to their expostulations was: "Right about face, march." As the men could secure no attention to

their wrongs, though they obeyed this order it was not long before they ran away from the marching caravan and went straggling back to the Ravine Station (eight miles from Macdonald's camp) to lay, they said, their wrongs before Mr Jackson.

How far Mabruk was responsible for the men's actions at first can never be known. He had been a trusted officer for years, and his whole record previous to 1897 good. Afterwards, when committed to mutiny, there can be no doubt that he, and subsequently Bilal to an even greater extent, spared no effort to incite the men to resistance.* Macdonald despatched an officer to warn Lieutenant Feilding (in command at the Ravine) of the approach of the deserters. The men at this time had no thoughts of fighting or injuring their officers, for they allowed the officer carrying Macdonald's message, though he was alone, to pass through them unmolested, and actually engaged in friendly conversation with him. The first batch to reach the Ravine were only thirty-six in number. With these Lieutenant Feilding tried to reason, and endeavoured to induce them to pile arms and come into the fort. They declined to do this until the remainder of their comrades should join them, whereupon the maxim was prepared and they were told that if they did not lay down their arms they would be fired upon.

* Bilal should have better known the power of England, for he had served in Egypt.

On their renewed refusal Feilding was told to fire on them. Though strongly disapproving of this course, Feilding had no option but to obey his senior officer, and the maxim having jammed, the Soudanese of the garrison fired. Three volleys were exchanged, but as both sides, unwilling to touch their comrades, fired high, no one was injured.

Though thus physically harmless, the moral effects of this fire were deadly and far-reaching. It turned the discontented "soldiers of the Queen," as they somewhat pathetically called themselves, into mutineers, and it confirmed their belief in the insinuations of some of the native officers that the Government had determined on their destruction, and for that reason had sent them to join the Macdonald expedition.

That same evening, 23rd September, Mr Jackson, with Major Macdonald and twenty of his Sikhs, some maxims, and 250 armed Swahili arrived at the Ravine.* For three days the mutineers parleyed, but the terms Mr Jackson offered—"Pardon to the rank and file if they returned to their duty at once, but that the officers and sergeants would have to explain their conduct to their military superiors,"†

* The remainder of the expedition proceeded north only to be recalled 14th November.

† Blue Book A2/98. It seems probable that the mutineers did not know who were meant by these. Possibly they thought Major Macdonald was referred to.

did not satisfy them. • This is not a matter of wonder; a return to their duty involved a return to the dreaded expedition, under a commander whom they already distrusted, and from whose treatment, incensed by their desertion, they had now everything to fear. Very possibly a childish fear, but what are savages but children?

On the 26th, the mutineers, joined by some of the Ravine garrison, started towards Uganda. Their objective was evidently, in the first place, Lubwa's, where there was a Muslim settlement, in which they had left many of their wives and families; and in the second place, Uganda, where they had many co-religionists, and where they could rely on finding plenty of food and loot. As the opportunity of either reconciling or annihilating the mutineers presented at the Ravine had been lost, it seems obvious that the only remaining course was, at once to cut off the mutineers from their objective, and to endeavour to get between them and their comrades of the last batch of the escort for the expedition. Macdonald, however, allowed them to proceed by the new bullock road which passes Nandi (about 55 miles from the Ravine and 45 from Mumia's), by which road their comrades were approaching, whilst he and his column went to Mumia's by the Guaso Masa. (This old caravan track, which does not go near Nandi, is more difficult marching and much longer

than the Nandi route). At Nandi, Captain Bagnall, who was in charge, had received orders from Mr Jackson to detain the mutineers. This he was quite unable to do, for both his garrison and the remainder of the three companies of the escort, who had not yet reached their destination but were halting at Nandi, immediately on the appearance of the mutineers from the Ravine joined them, seized the fort, and tied up Captain Bagnall. Fortunately for that officer, Jardeen Effendi, one of the best of the native officers, who had only thrown in his lot with the mutineers with reluctance, was able to release him, and he escaped.

The mutineers, having looted the fort, were now well supplied with ammunition, and, greatly increased in number, proceeded on their way to Mumia's, near which place they camped on 7th October. They did not attack this fort, which was garrisoned by Swahili and porters, hastily armed by Mr Tompkins (in charge). Major Macdonald and his column reached the place on the next day. He had, on hearing of what had passed at Nandi, sent a message to Major Thruston to warn him that "Mabruk meant business." This message, however, never reached Major Thruston. At Mumia's Mr Jackson renewed the negotiations with the mutineers, but without any better success, and on the 9th they moved off. Whilst the pursuing column was at Mumia's it was arranged that Macdonald and a hundred men should

go north to collect, if wanted, the other two columns of the expedition. The report that Mr Fowler, of Port Victoria, was in difficulties with the mutineers at the Sio river, caused this plan to be abandoned, and the pursuing column left Mumia's on 11th October. It did not follow the usual caravan road to Lubwa's, but one to the north of it, very little shorter and considerably more difficult. Its progress was very slow, which may be partly accounted for by the country being flooded and by the route chosen; but, after allowing for every drawback, it is difficult to understand how the column took eight days to cover the distance between Mumia's and Lubwa's,* about 84 miles: the whole distance has been frequently done with troops in three days.

• To return to Major Thruston, who, in Unyoro, fully occupied in his own duties, and far from Kampala, had remained only imperfectly acquainted with the situation in Uganda. On 27th August he left Masindi for Entebbi, to succeed Major Ternan in the command of the troops. He reached Entebbi about the first or second week in September, and in a letter from that place immediately after his arrival there, says:—

“Ternan has gone to England, and I reign, as far as the troops are concerned, in his stead; but the civil administration

* Later in the same month a force of 1000 Waganda, under Captain Malony, marched 59 miles in 46½ hours over a continuation of the same road.

is in the hands of the senior civil man. . . . The country is rather unsettled, and I may have to take the field at any moment. I arrived too late to take any part in the suppression of the rebellion. Mwanga is a prisoner with the Germans. Macdonald has taken three of my best companies for the Italian Boundary commission. . . . It is most inconvenient at the present juncture. I am trying to replace them, but I can only enlist boys, as there are no men among the Soudanese." . . .

On 13th September he again wrote, the last letter ever received at home from him :—

"The Uganda Rifles are in great disorder owing to the expeditions and rebellion. I am very busy trying to put things to rights."

Thruston was thus busily engaged, when, on 5th October, Mr G. Wilson, the senior civil officer then at Kampala, heard that native reports had reached Port Victoria to the effect that the Soudanese with the Macdonald expedition had mutinied, and were advancing towards the lake. On Major Thruston being informed of this, he saw how critical a situation might arise if the mutineers were not induced to return to their duty, and should succeed in entering Uganda proper. He knew the excitability of the Soudanese soldiers when treated unjustly,* and he knew their grievances to be both grave and just, and knew, too, the unsettled state of the country. If the mutineers

* Casali, in his Equatoria, speaking of the Soudanese soldiers, alludes to "the prompt and intense hatred that is aroused in them by undeserved punishment."

were to be kept out of Uganda, with its scattered Europeans—traders and missionaries, some of them English women—it was of paramount importance that they should not cross the Victoria Nile. With the exception of the Protestant Waganda, we had few friends in the Protectorate.

Thruston, therefore, after being closeted with his adjutant, Captain Malony, giving him directions as to what was to be done, started by road to Lubwa's (9th October).^{*} Captain Malony begged to be allowed to go in his stead, but to this he could not agree, as the best prospect of success lay in his own personal influence over the men—most of whom had, three years before, served under him in Unyoro—and in his intimate knowledge of their language. Malony then asked to go with him. This was impossible, for both could not be spared from headquarters. Thruston also told Malony he was perfectly aware he was running a great risk, though he thought it well to speak confidently to the civil authorities and in public. It may occur to the reader, if conversant with the official account of these events, to ask why Major Thruston did not take a force of Waganda to Lubwa's with him, even though this would have entailed some delay. The reason is not far to seek. There is such ill-will between the Protestant Waganda and the Muslim, Soudanese that had the mutineers found the fort held by Waganda they would at once have suspected that

^{*} Letters from Kampala say 9th.

they were about to be entrapped, and all prospect of a peaceful settlement would thus have been frustrated. The Soudanese would have fought, as indeed they did afterwards fight, to the death, rather than submit to the Waganda.

Lubwa's is situated on a peninsula close to where the Victoria Nile joins the lake, and within a few miles of the crossing of the river at Jinja; it is 65 miles by the land route from Kampala, and about 84 from Mumia's, and is in easy communication by water with Kampala, Port Victoria, and Entebbi. By its position it is the best place to protect the province of Uganda from any raids from the east of the Victoria Nile. As has been before mentioned, a large Muslim and Soudanese settlement lies close to the fort. The province of Usoga, in which it is, was at this time in a most unsettled condition—"ripe for rebellion" is the expression of one writing on the spot. Even before the news of the mutiny had reached him, Mr G. Wilson had requested Major Thruston to strengthen the garrison, in view of the state of affairs in the surrounding country. In charge was Mr N. A. Wilson, a young and recently appointed official, who, gallant and willing as he was, could not have either the experience or the knowledge of the language necessary to cope with so difficult a situation. Here Major Thruston arrived on the 11th October; the garrison, as yet uncontaminated by the mutineers, fell at his feet

and swore to be true to their allegiance. His first act was to send all canoes both at Lubwa's and Jinja to the other side, to prevent the mutineers making use of them to cross the Nile; his next to strengthen the defences of the stockade, and to drill the young boys, of whom, with a few old pensioners, the greater part of the garrison consisted, which served to occupy their attention and also prepare for eventualities.

Here it was that, on 14th October, Mr Weatherhead of the Church Missionary Society, coming to the fort found Major Thruston and Mr Wilson—the last man of their own race who ever saw them,*—and wrote:—

"On our arrival at the fort we found drilling and exhortation going on. Just outside were drawn up the garrison (by-the-by, nearly all of these were little better than raw recruits—they numbered, all told, 150). Inside the fort, standing on the raised ground, were Wilson and Thruston. I heard the native officer address the men, and they all answered together. I may as well also say here that these Nubians had sworn to stick to Wilson through thick and thin. A bugle was blown, and immediately all the men rushed into the fort and took up their positions for defence. I was introduced to Major Thruston . . . He was far from well. . . . Thruston had decided to throw out earthworks at opposite corners to defend the fort. . . They were at work on these earthworks when I last saw them, Thruston lying on an easy chair under a tree superintending."

* All further particulars of their fate are drawn from the information given by their Swahili servants and the evidence at the court-martials of the mutineers, except only Major Thruston's last letter sent to Mr Jackson.

On the previous day to this, 13th October, Mr Fowler, late a Lieutenant in the Royal Navy, and temporarily attached to the Uganda Rifles, had come with thirty men to Lubwa's. Major Thruston sent him the same day with a letter to Captain Woodward, whom he believed to be in command of the column of the Macdonald expedition that was pursuing the mutineers.

LUBWA'S, USOGA, 13th October 1897.

CAPTAIN WOODWARD,—Please, if convenient, deliver to Mr Fowler one maxim gun and two belts, and a square box of ammunition to be mounted on the steamer. In the absence of contrary orders from Mr Jackson, proceed with your column to Lubwa's by the shortest route. Canoes are being sent to Port Victoria, but delay may occur. In marching through Usoga, if you get in touch with the mutineers, before engaging in hostilities, inform them that I, who have full powers to treat with them in every respect, am waiting for them at Lubwa's, and if they will come to me quietly there, they will not be required to rejoin Major Macdonald, but will be allowed to re-enter the Government service. Canoes may be expected on the 17th instant.

A. B. THRUSTON (*Major*).

This letter was given to Major Macdonald on the 14th October,* he and his column having passed the Sjo River, and being about 45 miles from Lubwa's. Why it ~~was~~ not acted upon, nor any mention of it made in Major Macdonald's despatches, as published, has not been explained. No such message as desired in it ~~was~~.

* And three days before the treacherous seizure of the officers at Fort Lubwa's.

ever sent to the mutineers. The column, indeed, proceeded to Lubwa's, but slowly, not covering more than 12 miles a day. No effort was made to get between the mutineers and that place, and thus join hands with Major Thruston, whose garrison of boys would have been encouraged in their loyalty, and the traitorous element intimidated by the presence of the column with its numerous European staff, its Sikhs, maxims, and Swahili.

So early as 5th October, and before Major Thruston's arrival at the fort, the mutineers had sent messengers to Lubwa's. Mr Vialle, a civilian trading in the country at this time, met, in Usoga, several Soudanese who stated that they were looking for deserters from the Macdonald expedition. It is evident that these men were on their way to the Muslim settlement at Lubwa's, where they remained in concealment and in secret communication with some of the garrison of the fort. Though it appears that the greater part of the garrison either was not aware of, or did not respond to, the efforts of these emissaries to corrupt their fidelity, yet, unfortunately, the latter won over to their cause a sufficient number to effect their purpose; and on the arrival of the mutineers' advance guard before the fort at between three and four o'clock on Sunday morning, 17th October, it was secretly admitted by twelve of the garrison. The patrols and sentries must also, some of them, have betrayed their trust, for Mr Weather-

head, in the letter before quoted, speaking of this day, or rather night, says :

"We finally got off at twelve o'clock" (midnight 16-17th October from Jinja in order to cross the Nile to Lubwa's). "We got near Busoga ; the moon came out grandly from the clouds. The lake was very beautiful by moonlight, the land seeming very close, and the hills looking much smaller than in daylight. On nearing the Usoga shore I gave orders for silence, as I did not want to uselessly alarm the fort people. On mounting the steps cut out of the rock leading from the landing stage, I saw that sentries were posted outside the fort all round. As we went through the open space in front of the fort, a young Nubian sentry came up to me. To him I handed over the postman from Uganda with letters for Thruston, and saw him taken to the entrance. I did not go to the fort myself, but passed by close to its walls, and saw that everything was very much alive there. As our strange little party passed on, now and again a sentry would come up close and look into my face, but not one attempted to stop me. This was at 2.30 A.M., moonlight. Then we came across five or six men patrolling the roads in couples. These also stared but let us pass. Here the road divided into two to cross the great hill. The right-hand one is that that leads past our mission station, and this accordingly I took. We passed Lubwa's place and were nearing the foot of the hill when I saw in front four more Nubians, who immediately crouched down in the shade. At first I thought they might be more patrols, but on seeing them closer, there was no doubt that I had lighted on a party of the mutineers. This was obvious from their cloaks and heavy kit. I walked on past the four, saluting them, and began to climb the hill. But on the side of the hill were a number more straggling down without any order ; here was one man by himself, then a couple or so, then three together,

making in all about twenty. It was curious to see their action on my approach—I might have been a ghost. They would stop walking, some would crouch down, free themselves from their baggage, and seize their guns. It must have been such a totally unexpected sight to see one European, two boys, two porters, and one other man, quietly and deliberately walking up the hill without a gun of any kind in the party. Of course my only chance was to walk straight ahead. To have shown the slightest fear would probably have been to give myself away, and I was very pleased that my boys and men followed me without any apparent alarm, though I told them they were the rebels we had come across. In this way we passed the lot. One or two of the Nubians answered my salutations quite warmly. I did think of sending a man by bye-ways to the fort to let Thruston know that some rebels were on the way, for I rightly counted on at least an equal number of them descending the hill by the other road. But I did not, because I never for a moment dreamt of the treachery that was going on inside the fort, and so reckoned that the sentries would discover the men I had seen."

That only a very few of the garrison were traitors, speaks much for the influence of the English officers, when it is remembered that these Soudanese recruits were many of them related to the mutineers, and had seen the privation which the parsimony of the Government, and the absence of the Soudanese companies on the Ternan and Macdonald expeditions, had entailed on their families.

There can be no doubt that Rehan Effendi, the native Captain of the garrison, was in league with the native officers of the mutinous companies, and

that it was with his connivance, if not by him, that the mutineers were admitted. His treachery was all the more disgraceful as he entirely owed his promotion to Major Thruston, who had been struck by his smart, soldier-like, execution of his duties in the Unyoro Expedition of 1894.

The mutineer advance guard were admitted at between three and four o'clock A.M. on the morning of Sunday, the 17th October. Major Thruston and Mr Wilson were overpowered and put in chains and their quarters looted. That afternoon Mr Scott, the engineer of the steam launch which had been sent with reinforcements from Kampala, though warned by the Soudanese on board, seeing the Union Jack still flying at the landing, put in, and was immediately also seized and put in chains. His crew, and the faithful Soudanese with him were, it is said, very cruelly treated by the mutineers.

Meanwhile, the pursuing column on its slow march heard from native sources, on the evening of the same day, of what had taken place at Lubwa's. On the next morning (18th October), when five miles from Lubwa's, a letter was received from Captain Malony confirming the native report. A little later in the day the column arrived on the hill before the fort, and distant from it one and a quarter miles. Soon afterwards about one hundred* of the mutineers

*The official accounts say two hundred,*but private letters written on the spot at the time say about one hundred.

came out of the fort and up the hill to meet the column. When the mutineers were near enough for their voices to be heard, they kept their guns down, and stated that they did not want to fight. They finally came within fifteen yards of the English force, and some of them shook hands with the friendly Soudanese, of whom there were twenty-six with the column. After some talk, the greater number of the mutineers returned to the fort. Some twenty of them, however, remained behind, and entered into conference with Mr Jackson and Major Macdonald. To these, according to the Blue Books, Mr Jackson said:

"That though some of them had behaved still worse since he saw them, he was quite prepared to go fully and impartially into their grievances. He urged, as a first step, that they should deliver up the prisoners, and return to their allegiance, and thus permit him to go into the whole question. The spokesman* of the mutineers professed themselves very well pleased with these arrangements, and gave it to be understood that they would be complied with the next day. They were told to come up in a body, but not in the formation of an attacking force. Thereupon they left, and Mr Jackson and Major Macdonald proceeded to establish their camp."†

Were it not that it is from themselves that we learn it, it would seem incredible that Mr Jackson and Major Macdonald, having before them their recent

* The word is *spokesman*, as given in the Blue Book.

† Blue Book, Africa, 10, 1898.

failures in negotiations with the mutineers under far more favourable circumstances,* should have trusted to these vague assurances coming from, as far as is ascertainable, a simple mutineer, and not from the leaders; and further, that they should have thus consented to leave their fellow-countrymen for another afternoon and night in the power of the Soudanese. On the afternoon of the same day (18th October) the official narrative says:

"Some two hours later" (than the conference before mentioned) "a Soudanese corporal, accompanied by one of Major Thruston's Swahili servants, arrived with a note from the Major on a small piece of paper to Mr Jackson. The note was headed in large letters, 'Don't fight unless attacked,' then stated that he and Mr Wilson and Mr Scott were prisoners, and that it would be best to try and secure their release by negotiations. The corporal† might be trusted to bring back an answer, and the note ended by saying, that if his suggestions interfered with Mr Jackson's plans, then to proceed as might be thought best, and not to allow any considerations for his own safety to stand in the way."

The official account omits to say that the note further stated that they were "in chains."

To this Mr Jackson sent an answer to the effect that everything should be done for Major Thruston's release, and asking him if he had any suggestions to

* At the Ravine the mutineers were only 188, and Major Macdonald had his whole expedition at hand with its 7 maxims, 2 hotchkiss guns, 50 Sikhs and some 700 armed Swahili, and an immense quantity of ammunition.

† Mr Jackson in a private letter says "Bearer."

make to that end. Mr Jackson also sent a message to the native officers to say that his intentions were in no way hostile, and proposing that they should release their Commandant to attend a conference at which their grievances should be gone into. These well-intentioned messages were, as should have been apparent at the time, fruitless. How could Major Thruston, chained by the neck in a hut and closely guarded, even if he received Mr Jackson's note, know what was going on or hope to communicate again with the English force, when the above-mentioned little note had evidently been sent with great difficulty? The corporal had told Mr Jackson that he would have to "smuggle in" the reply to Major Thruston, and he could not therefore be expected to deliver a message to the native officers, and thus reveal he had been to the English camp. To do so would probably be to forfeit his life, the native officers being both summary and cruel in their methods. They were, doubtless, aware of the talk in the English force that they were to be hunted down, and any attempt of the soldiers to communicate with the English or make terms for themselves would, it cannot be doubted, have been bitterly resented by them.

The remainder of this day and the following night passed, according to the official accounts, "without further incident." No attempt was made to effect a rescue or the release of the prisoners; no ransom or pardon was offered, and no bribe to the friendly

Soudanese in the camp (26) of any one else to induce them to try and help the prisoners to escape. General and vague suggestions were indeed made at the conference, but no definite or written terms of any sort were offered, and no effort was made to gain over one of the native officers, less ill affected than the rest, to connive at an escape.*

Though at the time it was, of course, not known to Mr Jackson, "there is evidence . . . that the men were talking of tying up their native officers and liberating the European prisoners,"† and there is, therefore, every probability that had any of these methods been tried on this or the next day, they would have been successful. With the men in this humour, a leader and an effort would have made all the difference.

The next morning (19th October) the mutineers came up to the camp about half-past six o'clock in a body, as had been suggested by Major Macdonald, but apparently prepared to fight. The conflict which ensued was possibly inevitable. The mutineers fought well; Lieutenant Feilding, gallantly leading his men, was shot through the heart, and died instantly. The Sikhs fought as they ever fight, splendidly. Mr Jackson was severely, and Dr MacPherson slightly, wounded. The mutineers were repulsed, and driven down the hill towards the fort. Un-

* Jardeen Effendi was such an one.

† Blue Book, Africa, 10, 1898.

fortunately they were not pursued—the shortness of ammunition is the reason given for this in the despatches, a shortness due to the neglect of bringing a proper supply from the Ravine, where, as passing travellers have related, there was a superfluity. The fight ended at 11.30. A.M., and Mr Jackson being incapacitated by his wound, the whole control devolved on Major Macdonald. In the afternoon a deputation of one mutineer came from the fort to ask for terms, stating that the prisoners were alive and unhurt, and offering to release them if Major Macdonald would promise the mutineers their lives and an enquiry into their grievances. This Major Macdonald refused, and demanded “unconditional surrender.” All mention of this deputation is omitted from the despatches, as published, and from Mr Berkeley’s report on the mutiny. The deputation returned to the fort with this uncompromising reply. Even so far back as the march from the Ravine to Mumia’s, it had been the common talk in the English force that the native officers of the mutineers were to be “hunted down,” and there was a continual interchange of news, “through native sources,” between the mutineers and their pursuers. It is also well known to those conversant with native ways, that information flies and rumour spreads in the most unaccountable manner. There can, therefore, be little doubt that the native officers were aware of their probable fate if they fell in the power of

Major Macdonald. It seems probable that Bilal, by far the most able and unscrupulous of the leaders, considered that the only way to secure the adherence of the rank and file to the cause of the native officers was to make them commit themselves beyond all hope of pardon. Now that it is known that the prisoners were not shot by the men in the frenzy of defeat, this seems the only possible explanation of Bilal's cold-blooded murder of his Commandant, for he certainly had no personal feeling against that officer, but on the contrary had, it is said, recently received a favour at his hands.

At about sunset on this day (19th October)* Bilal ordered the prisoners to be brought out, and with his own hands shot Major Thruston, and Mr N. A. Wilson was shot immediately afterwards, both unflinchingly, and calmly meeting their fate. Mr Wilson was only twenty-five years old, and was much attached to the Soudanese under his charge. One of his last acts had been to write home for some presents for his men. Scott, it is reported, fought fiercely for his life, but he was overpowered and shot also.

Meantime those in the European camp as yet knew nothing of what had happened in the fort.

* The official accounts say "immediately after the fight," but the most trustworthy of the evidence leaves no doubt that "at sunset" is correct. It would seem just possible that it was not till the afternoon of the 20th October, but such is not the opinion of those who have the best means of judging.

But, as from the tenor of Major Macdonald's reply to the mutineers it might be expected, nothing was done during this day and the ensuing night to attempt the release of the three Englishmen, nor on the next day, Wednesday, 20th October, in the course of which, and before the report that the prisoners had been killed had reached the camp, another deputation was sent by the mutineers again offering to give up the prisoners if their lives and a redress of their wrongs were assured to the mutineers. To this deputation, Major Macdonald in his despatch states,* "liberal terms were offered for the release of the prisoners." The exact terms he, however, did offer were, "Unconditional surrender," and for this the evidence is unimpeachable.

• Though this narrative should, strictly speaking, now close, yet a short summary of the events subsequent to Major Thruston's death and of the fate of the principal actors in the mutiny may not be without interest.

For several days after the fight on the 19th October the mutineers remained unmolested in the fort. On the evening of the 19th Major Macdonald's force was joined by some of the Usoga, and on the 20th and succeeding days was further reinforced by some 1000 Waganda and Captain Malony and a hotchkiss gun, and from time to time it was further increased till, on 4th November, a correspondent of

* Blue Book, Africa, 2, 1898.

the *Daily Mail* thus somewhat bitterly describes the situation:—"At the outside, 200 Soudanese setting at defiance (in fact marching up and down the earth-works which they have thrown up, with an Egyptian flag at their head) a force of about fifteen thousand." The mutineers prolonged their defence for nearly three months, during which there were several more or less severe conflicts. Mr Pilkington (Church Missionary Society) and Lieutenant Macdonald were killed, and the loss on both sides was heavy, that of the Waganda especially so.

This prolonged resistance, which in another cause would have been extolled as heroic, and been rewarded by medals and orders innumerable, came to an end, not by storm or capitulation, but by an easy evacuation of the fort by water. The mutineers crossed the arm of Lake Victoria (about a mile broad), which separates the peninsula on which Fort Lubwa's stands from the mainland, very much at their leisure; they took several days about it, and removed their women and children and loot. The besiegers were unable to prevent this movement (owing to Major Macdonald having taken away the steam launch and its gun), as they only had canoes, whose crews refused to face the mutineers. The investing force was at the time also much reduced, as many of its best troops (it had been previously joined by both some of the British East African Protectorate Soudanese and Sikh troops) had been sent on to assist in the

operations in Budu, where the rebels had again risen.

The mutineers having thus made good their escape, proceeded northwards. At Kabagambe, near Lake Kioga, where many of their number had ensconced themselves in a stockade, they were attacked, and the stockade taken by Captain Harrison of the B.E.A. Rifles.* In this fight Captain Malony was so severely wounded that he died shortly afterwards, thus not long surviving Major Thruston, whose danger he had so generously wished to share. Lieutenant Osborn (Oxfordshire Light Infantry, attached to the Uganda Rifles) was also wounded.

Again, in April 1898, Major Martyr with some Indian troops attacked a large body of the mutineers, under Bilal, at Umruli. Yet though driven out of the fort there, they were able to establish themselves in a stockade only five miles off, where he did not feel strong enough to pursue them, and from which they were not dislodged till 14th August following, when Major Martyr again attacked and defeated them.

In October they attacked and defeated a small party of Beloochees under Lieutenant Hannington near Kisalizi, taking 1500 cartridges, and wounding severely Lieutenant Hannington, and so, raiding here, beaten there, now joining this disaffected

* 24th February 1898.

chief, and then attacking that loyal one, they continued the unequal struggle till December 1898, nearly fifteen months after the mutiny at the Ravine.

Of the native officers who were present at Lubwa's, and more or less implicated in the murders, Mabruk either died of his wounds or was killed before the evacuation of the fort. Jardeen was shot at Kabagambe. Though twelve of the mutineers were hanged at Kampala, not one of the leaders was captured or tried. Bilal met the soldier's death he little deserved, being shot by a patrol under Lieutenant Price on 6th December, more than thirteen months after his crimes at Lubwa's. The less guilty privates and non-commissioned officers have lost by death, in fight or of their wounds, from four to five hundred men. This is more than the whole number at Lubwa's, but it must be remembered that the mutineers were joined, from time to time, by the old and the young of their kindred not in the regiment. Some are still at large.* Mwanga and Kabarega have been taken prisoners, and by the last accounts were on their way to the coast.

The struggle to maintain the English supremacy against both mutineers and rebels was far more severe than has been officially admitted. The murders at Lubwa's, and the long defiance of our strength by the mutineers in the fort, at which

* September 1899.

even the natives did not fail to mock, deeply wounded our prestige and greatly protracted the resistance of our enemies. Yet in the end Major Thruston's words have come true : For every Englishman killed, ten Englishmen have come to take his place ; and at length our supremacy is re-established.

THE END.

INDEX

- ABU HAMAD**, 248
Abu Sari, 273, 274
Adowa, the Italian reverse at, 242
Ahmad Ali, 176 (*note*); his death, 177, 178
Ajaka, 293
Akasha, 248, 249, 251, 252; decision to advance to, 242
Akkad, 276
Albert Edward, Lake, 150, 202, 204
Albert Nyanza, Lake, 88, 93, 141, 150, 198, 199, 202, 204; Sir Samuel Baker's description of, 142
Alexandra, the, 159, 212, 215, 216, 217
Ali, the chief, 196, 197 (*note*).
Amara, the chief, 157, 198; his irregulars, 189; his death, 292
Ambatch tree, the, 147
Ambigol, 245, 249, 250
Ambuscades, 156, 229, 230
Anglo-Belgian agreement, the, 199
Ankole, 79
Ansorge, Dr, 233, 291; his account of the death of Amara, 292
Arabi Dafalleh, 166
Arthur, Lieut., 129, 131, 135, 139
Assouan, 39, 247; visit of Tewfik Pasha to, 40; cholera at, 262
Athi River, the, 112
Ayara, 170, 172, 197
Ayara's village, 169, 181, 197
BAERT, Lieut., 162, 165
Bagnall, Capt., ordered to detain the mutineers, 302
Baillie, Colonel, 33
Baird, General, well sunk by, 42
Baker, Sir Samuel and Lady, 142, 167, 168
Baraka Khor, the, 51
Baratieri, General, 242
Barbarous conduct, 209
Batan-ul-Hajar, the, 248, 269
Bedawin tribes, the, 53, 54
Belgian Soudanese soldiers, 174
Berenice, 48
Berkeley, Mr, appointed Administrator of the Uganda Protectorate, 287; his report on the mutiny, 317
Besant, Capt., 98, 106, 123
Bida, defeat of Mwanga at, 289
Bilal Effendi, 28, 31, 295 (*note*); death of, 29, 322; oath of, 297; his part in the mutiny of the troops, 299; in the murder of Major Thruston, 318; at Umruli, 321
Broadwood, Capt., 247
Budonga Forest, the, 136
Budu, 79; flight of Mwanga to, 289; the rebellion in, 296, 321
Burn-Murdoch, Major, 252, 256; his cavalry action, 246, 247
Butiaba, 199, 212
Byles, Mr, 228
CABINET secrets, 241
Camels, overstocking with, 49
Casati, Capt., 126
Cataract, "Great Gate" of the second, 266, 267
Cholera, 262, 263

- Cochrane, Colonel, 23, 261, 280; illness of, 272
- Colville, Commander, R.N., 274; wounded, 278
- Colville, Colonel (now Sir Henry), 21, 23, 84, 93, 94, 97, 123, 126, 127, 132, 135, 139, 148, 150, 175, 197; assumes the Commissionership of Uganda, 83, 92; commands the Unyoro Expedition, 127-52; re-enters Uganda, 152; illness of, 233; personal influence of, 233
- Congo Free State, 167; the administration of, 205; troops of, 162, 163
- Cromer, Lord, 243
- Cunningham, Major, 41, 44, 93, 188, 233
- Daily Mail's* description of the situation at Fort Lubwa's, 320
- Darab Kati, the dervish, 56, 57
- Debbah, a garrison established at, 282
- Dépôt, a military life at, 36, 37
- Dervish prisoners, sufferings of from cholera, 264
- Dervish village, a, 257
- Dervishes, the, 246-50, 253-59, 275-82
- Devonshire, the Duke of, 297
- D'hanis's expedition, Baron, 290
- Disibwell, 64, 67
- Dongola, 280-82
 the expedition to, 239 *et seq.*
 the events leading to, 242,
 243; the difficulties of, 244;
 work connected with, 265-68
 the occupation of, 23, 282
- Drummond, Professor, 103
- Duroor, 49
- Dust storms, 52, 251
- EGYPT, cholera in, 262, 264
- Egyptian army, the, 37, 60
 camel, the, 249
 monuments, 48
- Elmienteita, 114
- El Teb, the battle of, 59
- Emin Pasha, 85, 87, 126, 127, 168;
 his soldiers, 85, 87, 165
- Entebbi, 129; the garrison of, 92;
 Major Thruston's arrival at, 289,
 290
- FADJOA, 291, 292
- Fadl-ul-Mula, 165, 166
- Fashoda, expedition for, 296
- Fatiko, Kabarega in exile at, 290
- Feilding, Lieut., 30, 299, 300; shot by
 the mutineers, 316
- Fellaheen soldiers, the, 59
- Fenwick, Capt., death of, 264
- Ferieg, 274
- Firkeh, 248, 249, 260
- Flies, swarms of, 251
- Forests, 113, 114, 116, 121, 223
- Forster, Mr, 150, 175, 177, 181, 184,
 185, 186, 187, 188, 199, 235; wounded
 by a poisoned arrow, 200; sent to the
 Kafu, *ib.*; attacked by the Wunyoro,
 201; his experiences, 217
- Fowler, Mr, 303, 308
- French mission, outcry of, the, 81
- GALLWAY, Surgeon-Colonel, 261, 263,
 265
- Gerouard, Lieut., 269
- Gibb, Capt., 92, 93, 98, 106, 129;
 despatched to Umruli, 183; invalided
 to England, 194
- Gnu, multitudes of, 113
- Gordon, General, 126, 127; his policy
 with regard to Uganda and Unyoro,
 84
- Graham, Sir G., 52
- Grant, Mr, 93, 94, 193
- "Great Rift Valley," Dr Gregory's,
 103, 107
- Green-Willinson, Capt., 254
- Grenfell, Sir Francis, 37, 38, 47
- HAFIR, 276, 278, 279
- Halaib, 49

- Hamid bin Thweyu, the sultan, 100, 101
- Hamid Hassan Anob, 55, 69, 75
- Hannek, 248
- Hannington, Bishop, the murder of, 120
- Hannington, Lieut., 321
- Hardinge, Sir Arthur, 33
- Haretri, 64, 65
- Harrison, Capt., captures mutineers' stockade at Kabagambe, 321
- Hassan Wad Nagami, 257
- Hat-el-estiva, 88
- Hippopotani, 172
- Hoima, Fort, 93, 149, 150, 152, 154, 155, 158, 174, 187, 291
- Holled-Smith, Sir C., 33, 47, 48, 53, 58; defeats Osman Digna, 44; leaves the Egyptian service, 70
- Hunter, Sir A., 33, 48, 70, 249, 250, 252; applies for Major Thruston to be on his staff, 238; in the cholera camp at Halfa, 263; superintends the passing of the Second Cataract, 266
- INSABE, 204
- Ireyta, 209
- Ivory taken by Major Thruston, 23
- JACKSON, Mr., 29, 30; assumes charge of the Uganda Protectorate, 286; terms offered by to the mutineers, 300, 302; in conference with them, 313; his negotiations, 314, 315; wounded, 316
- Jardeen Effendi, 302, 316 (*note*); death of, 322
- Jawazieh, the, 40
- Jeddah, cholera at, 47
- Jinja, 306, 307
- Junker, Dr, 127
- KABAGAMBE, defeat of the mutineers at, 321
- Kabarega, King, standards and regalia of, 22, 23, 232; character and policy of, 83; a prisoner, 84, 322; driven out of his kingdom, 93; drives Sir S. Baker out of Unyoro, 126; his reputation for treachery, 127; his residence, 136; advance against his camp, 136-40; surprise of his camp, 149; defeat of his army, 150; his army re-assembles, 150, 151; his capital, 173; his witchcraft, 197, 198; expedition against, 221; his town, 226, 227; invited to become a British subject, 228; asks for peace, 232; no longer acknowledged King of Unyoro, 288; his movements, 291, 292
- Kafu River, the, 133, 150; attack on the fort at, 211
- Kajbar, 248
- Kampala, Capt. J. R. Macdonald at, 81; Sir Gerald Portal at, 82; the Soudanese troops at, 89, 92; burial of Bishop Hannington at, 120; arrival of Major Thruston at, 121, 129; prosperity of, 288, 290; jubilee rejoicings at, 289; mutineers hanged at, 322
- Katulla, 144, 147
- Katwe, the garrison at, 293
- Katyonje, 202, 205
- Kavalli, 170, 171, 205; death of, 29
- Kavirondo, 115, 116; British Protectorate proclaimed over, 287
- Kebuguzi, 221
- Kerma, 276
- Khalifa, character of the, 258, 259
- Khartoum, 248
- Kibiro, 143, 147, 148, 159
- Kibwezi, 111, 112
- Kikukari, 92
- Kikuyu forest, 113, 114
- Kioga, Lake, 321
- Kisalizi, defeat of Lieut. Hannington near, 321
- Kitanwe, 141, 149, 292; raids of the Wunyoro at, 211
- Kitchener, Sir H., 245, 252; *see also* the "Sirdar"

- Kitobe, 189
 Knowles, General, 243
 Kokreb Well, 61, 63
 Korosko, cholera at, 262
 Korti, a garrison established at, 282
 Kosheh, 260, 272; cholera at, 265; extension of the railway to, 266
 Kosseir, 41, 42, 43
 Kuft, 42
 "Kuya," or raid, the, 184
- LAAGES, Mons. de, 165
 Lataka tribe, the, 86
 Lawrie, Major, R.A., 255
 Lendu, the, 94
 Lewis, Major, 281
 Lubwa, the chief, 120
- Lubwa's Fort, mutineers admitted to, 28, 309, 312; position of, 306; evacuated by the mutineers, 320; effect of the mutiny at, 322, 323
 Lugard, Capt. (now Colonel), 80, 81, 88, 89, 165; his engagement made with the Soudanese soldiery, 89, 297 (*note*)
 Lurs, the, 162, 168, 194, 195, 210; their endurance of pain, 214
- MABRUK EFFENDI, 31, 298, 299; death of, 322
 Machell, Capt., 73
 Macdonald, Lieut., 320
 Macdonald, Capt. (now Colonel), J. R., the expedition of, 26, 27; arrival of at Fort Lubwa's, 29; employed on the survey of the proposed railway to Lake Victoria, 81; ignores Sir Gerald Portal's instructions, 82; joins with the Protestant faction, 83; acting administrator of Uganda, 90; his relations with Selim Bey, 91, 297; at Kampala, 129; pursues Kabarega, 136; in command of the expedition for Fashoda, 296; discontent of his troops, 296 *et seq.*; his pursuit of the mutineers, 301, 302, 308; in conference with them, 313; demands their unconditional surrender, 317, 319; reinforcement of his force, 319
- MacPherson, Dr., 316
 Magungo, 185, 188; fort at, 145
 Mahaji Kabir, 200, 231
 Mahaji Saghir, 162, 176, 198, 199, 215-18
 Makraka tribe, the, 86
 Malaria fever, 185
 Malony, Capt., 27, 32, 303 (*note*), 305, 312, 319; death of, 321
 Manyuema, the mutinous, 294
 Mapala, 136, 143, 206, 207, 208
 Martyr, Major, defeats the mutineers at Umruli, 321
 Masai, the, 86
 "Masailand," Mr Joseph Thomson's, 107
 Masaja Makuro, 93, 158, 189, 191
 Mashudi, 22
 Masindi, 173, 292; arrival of Major Thuston at, 290
 Mau Plateau, the, 26, 115, 296
 Merawi, 248; garrison established at, 282
 "Meridional Rift," the, 114
 Mirage, a, 43
 "Mixed" tribunal, the, 243, 244
 Mjasi, 207, 208, 209
 Mockler-Ferryman, Major, article by, in *Macmillan's Magazine*, 31
 Moffat, Dr, 135, 150, 158, 170, 171, 204, 205; invalided home, 220
 Mombasa, 102
 Monteil, Colonel, 126
 Mortimer, Mr, 278
 Msoga, 293
 Muhammad, the Dervish, 56, 57, 278
 Mumia's, 301, 303; the mutineers at, 302
 Murchison Falls, the, 293
 Mutineers, the, 300, 301, 310, 311; pursuit of, 302, 308; send messengers to Lubwa's, 309; admitted to Fort Lubwa's, 312; a conference with,

Mutineers—*continued.*

313; defeat of, 316; prolonged resistance of, 320; capture of their stockade at Kabagambe, 321; defeated at Umruli, *ib.*; fate of, 322
Mwanga, King, 128; flight of, 25; treaty made by, 80; his connection with Bishop Hannington's murder, 120; his fear of Colonel Colville, 233; discontent of, 287; curtailment of his power, 288; defeat and deposition of, 289; a prisoner, 322

NAFAR MAHMOUD, 56, 57, 61, 63, 64, 65; surrender of, 71; sent to Suakin, 72

Naivasha, Lake, 114

Nakuro, Lake, 115, 124

Nandi, 302; British Protectorate proclaimed over, 287

Ngare Nyuki, 296

Nile Arab, the, 275

North Stafford regiment, loss of men in, by cholera, 263, 264

• OHRWALDER, Father, and the Khalifa, 258

Oshid, 70, 72, 77

Osman Digna, 73, 74

• Owen, Major Roderick, 90, 91, 92, 93, 129, 131, 139, 143, 146, 147, 148, 150; death of, 264

Owen's Fort, 129

PAQUEBOTS Postes Khediviales, 44

Pike, Rev. Arthur, 32

Pilkington, Mr, 149 (*note*), 320

Portal, Sir Gerald, 90, 97; mission of to Uganda, 82, 96

Price, Lieut., 29, 322

Purkiss, Mr, 131, 143, 145, 146, 147, 148, 174

RABADONGO, 155, 156, 157, 209

Railway battalion, the, 250, 270

Ravine station, the, 299, 300; number of the mutineers at, 314 (*note*)

Red Sea ports; trade of, 48

Rehan Rashid, 176, 184, 187

Rehan (Effendi) in league with the native officers of the mutineers, 311, 312

Rodd, Mr Rennell, 100

Rundle, Colonel Leslie, R.A., 261, 274

Russell, General Lechmere, C.B., 18

Russell, Sir E. L., K.C.S.I., 18

SALISBURY, Lord, 33, 297

Salt industry, a, 143

Sarras, 259

Schweinfurth, Dr, 127

Scott, Mr, put in chains by the mutineers, 29, 312; killed, 31

Scottish Industrial Mission, a, 111

Selim Bey, 89, 91, 165, 297

Semliki River, the, 202, 203, 204

Seyyid Ali, the Sultan, 100

Seyyid Khalid, 100

Shellal, 247

Shoolis, the, 183

Sikhs, the, bravery of, 316

Singo, 79; trouble in, 25

Sinkat, 57, 58, 73, 74

Sio River, the, Major Macdonald's column passes, 308

Sirdar, the (*see also* "Kitchener") 73, 74, 75, 250, 251, 256

Sitwell's company, Captain, 294

Slaves, 167, 182

Sotheby, Admiral Sir T., 18

Soudanese, beliefs of, 198

Soudanese, the Muslim, hostility of to the Waganda, 305

Soudanese soldiery, the, 87, 90, 94, 158; augmentation of, 92; cruelty of, 182; behaviour of, 231; endurance of, 235; murmurings amongst,

289; pay of, 294; excitability of, 304

Speke and Baker, 126

Stevenson, Lieut., R.E., 269

Storm, a terrific, 161

Suakin, 46, 47, 51; forward movement from, 41

Suarda, 256, 257, 259

- TAKENDA, the Lur chief, 168, 181, 199, 211, 212, 213
- Teita tribe, the, 111
- Tel-el-Kebir, the battle of, 59
- Ternan, Capt. (now Colonel), 24, 25, 26, 289, 291, 295, 296; his treatment of Mwanga, 288; condition of his troops, 295, 296, 297; succeeded by Major Thruston, 303
- Tewfik Bey, 58
- Thruston, Arthur Blyford, birth and parentage of, 18; education of, *ib.*; gazetted to the Oxfordshire Light Infantry, 19; illness of, 19, 185; in Egypt and India, 19, 20, 23, 38, 237; appointed to the Egyptian army, 21; ordered to Suakin, *ib.*; resigns his Egyptian Commission, *ib.*, 75; appointed to the Uganda Commission, 21, 78; his work in Unyoro, 22, 93; mentioned in despatches, 22, 23; rewards for his services, 22, 23; appointed Special Service Officer to the Dongola Expedition, 23; second in command of the Uganda Rifles, 24, 26; in civil and military command of Unyoro, 24, 150; starts for Fort Lubwa's, 26, 305; reaches Fort Lubwa's, 27; death of, 31, 318; character of, 31, 33; monument to, 34; under fire, 65, 66; recalled to Suakin, 68; at home in Wales, 78; goes to Uganda, 97; his march up to Uganda, 106 *et seq.*; returns to England, 234; takes part in the Dongola Expedition, 239 *et seq.*; posted to the Camel Corps, 245; appointed staff officer of the line of communications, 261; called to the front, 273; in charge of the Arab Irregulars, 274; his arrival at Entebbe, 289, 290; at Masindi, 290; succeeds Major Ternan in command of Uganda Rifles, 293, 303; informed of the mutiny of the Soudanese with the Macdonald Expedition, 304; his arrangements for arrival and conciliation of mutineers, 305, 308; seized by mutineers, 28, 312; suggestions for his release, 314, 315; strengthens the defences of Lubwa's, 307; events subsequent to his death, 319 *et seq.*
- Thruston, Capt., R.N., 18
- Titi River, crossing the, 224, 229
- Tokar, 46, 47, 52, 73
effect of the capture of, 56
- Tompkins, Mr, 302
- Toro, 79; trouble in, 25
- Toski, the action at, 38
- Townshend's battalion, Major, 255
- Traske, Surgeon-Captain, death of, 264
- Trinkitat, 52
- Tsavo River, the, 110
- Tucker, Bishop, 120
- Tudway, Major, 245, 253, 256
- UGANDA, 79; the situation in, 25, 128; visit of Speke and Grant to, 80; abandoned by the I.B.E.A. Company and taken over by Imperial Government, 81; raids on the frontiers of, 84, 127; Roman Catholics and Protestants in, 128; organisation of, 129
- Uganda Protectorate, the, 25, 79, 80; proclaimed by Sir Gerald Portal, 82; changes in, 286; Mr Jackson in charge of, 286; Mr Berkeley's administration of, 287; hostility in to the English rule, 288; march of the mutineers towards, 301
- Uganda Rifles, the, 25, 80, 84, 85; mutiny of, 26, 28, 300; defeat of, 30; the organising of, 89; ordered to lay down their arms, 91; under the command of Major Thruston, 293
- Uma, the chief, 199, 211; a raid against, 231
- Umruli, 133, 291; defeat of the mutineers at, 321
- "Underan African Sun," Dr Ansorge's, 291
- Unyoro, 79; the state of, 24, 25, 26; invasion of, 83, 129; the expedition

Unyoro—*continued*.

to, 125 *et seq.*; the situation of, 141;
the occupation of, 153 *et seq.*; soil
and climate of, 154; number of
deaths in, 188; English Protectorate
proclaimed over, 287; condition of
the troops in, 294

Usoga, 79; trouble in, 25; English
Protectorate proclaimed over, 287;
"ripe for revolt," 289, 306

VALLAM, Mr, death of, 264

Vialle, Mr, 309

Victoria Nile, the, 145, 147, 174, 177

Victoria Nyanza, the, 119

Villiers, Lieut., 129, 139, 150

Von Kirkhoven, Captain, 126, 165

WADELAI, 148, 195

Wady Halfa, 248, 249, 261; cholera at,
262

Waganda, butchery by, 222

the Mohammedan, 26, 82,

84, 91, 128, 129, 154

the Protestant, 91, 149, 287,
305

army, the, 132, 137, 149,
151; heavy loss of, 320

Wa-Kikuya tribe, the, 114

Wa-Kamassia, the, an expedition
against, 25

Wa-Kamba race, the, 111

Wa-Kavirondo tribe, the, 116

Warburg's tincture, the effect of, 186

Wasoga tribe, the, 119

Weatherhead, Mr, 307; his account of
his arrival at Lubwa's fort, 310, 311

White man, the, curiosity about, 117

Williams, Capt., 89

Wilson, Mr G., 304, 306

Wilson, Mr N. A., put into chains by
the mutineers, 28, 312; death of,
31, 318; in charge of fort Lubwa's,
306

Wingate, Major, 274

Wodehouse, Colonel, 258

Woodward, Capt. (now Major), 27;
requested by Major Thurstun to go
to Lubwa's, 308

Wunyoro, the, 84, 137, 138, 155, 156,
157, 173, 189-92; defeat of, 207,
208; composition of their army, 210;
raids on, 218

Wylde, Mr A. B., 50

YABASWEZI, 191, 209

ZANZIBAR, 99; the Sultanate of, 101;
sultans of, 100; porters, 103

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